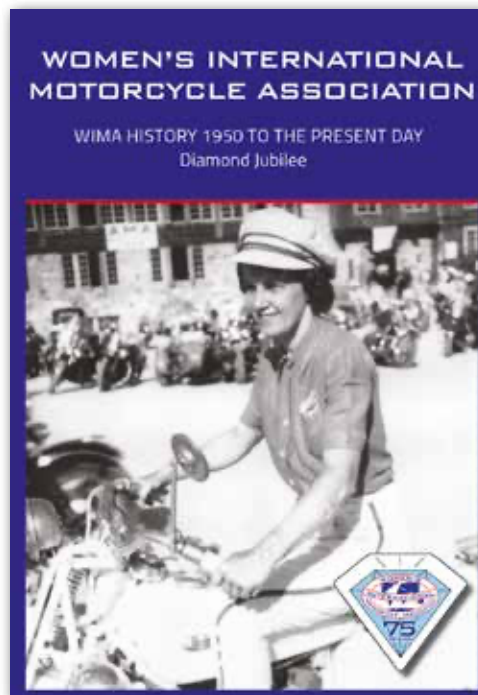


WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATION

WIMA HISTORY 1950 TO THE PRESENT DAY
Diamond Jubilee





Louise Scherbyn, 1949, Laconia, New Hampshire, USA. Original photo sent to Sheonagh Ravensdale.
Photographer unknown.

This history is dedicated to all those brave pioneering women motorcyclists
who paved the way for those of us who follow.

Also dedicated to the memory of Frances Popley who wrote and edited the first WIMA History, published
in 1980 and known as the Pearl Booklet. Visible here: <https://bit.ly/WIMAPearlBooklet>

A word on copyright

The copyright for this book lies with WIMA International, and national divisions are welcome to print the material for their members. However, we ask that the book (including all material and photographs) is not sold for profit, out of respect for the many hours of unpaid work that Sheonagh, Åsa and other volunteers have put in. An exception to this is if any division wishes to sell it to raise money for their supported organisation.

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Introduction



Sheonagh Ravensdale, Editor

When I joined WIMA back in 1982 I was fascinated to discover that in 1950, the year after I was born, the American motorcyclist, Louise Scherbyn, had set up an international organisation for women motorcyclists, and that in 1980, a GB member, Frances Popley, had researched and edited a history of the first thirty years.

Popularly known as the Pearl Booklet, this first history is available here <https://bit.ly/WIMAPearlBooklet> and contains a lot of interesting detail we don't have room to reproduce in this edition. Frances related, 'I wrote something in the region of seventy letters to more than ten countries, made numerous telephone calls to all parts of the country and clocked up many happy miles in search of material.' We're grateful to her daughters for sending us Frances's original research material. This edition is dedicated to the memory of Frances.

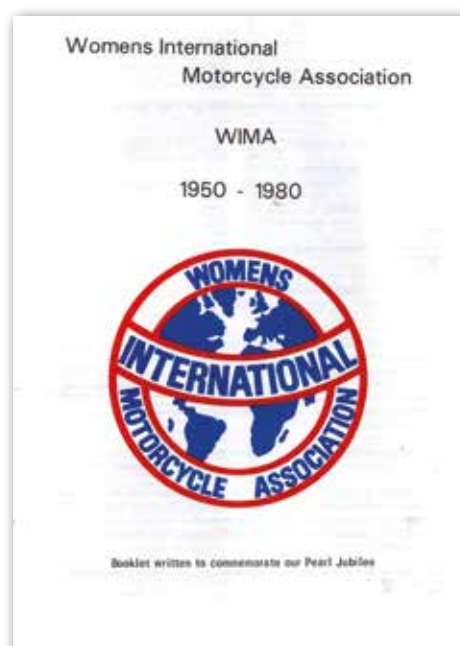
My co-editor Åsa and I have had a different journey from Frances. We've been able to travel far more internationally, meet more WIMA members personally over the years, and we have the advantage of the internet for research purposes.

This edition has a wider scope – to capture the essence of every current division, to give a flavour of the history and to feature the personalities who run the organisation today as well as those whom WIMA has honoured for their contribution to us all over the years. It's a digital edition, so it can be added to in the future.

Why have Åsa and I spent years putting this all together? I rode for eight years in London, commuting to work, before I met another rider. A chance article in 1981 in the Sunday Times called 'Sex and the art of motorcycle maintenance' led me to The Women's Motorcycle Workshop, run by WIMA member Anna Zee, currently president of FEMA – see her bio in the Ellen Pfeiffer award section. Jennifer Killen, who later became president of WIMA Australia and organised the first Australian international rally in 2000 was also there – see her report in the rally section. I immediately joined WIMA. My first international rally was 1983 in the Netherlands. What an eye opener it was to discover women from many countries, travelling from so far, to join together for a week of motorcycling and camaraderie!

Over the years, I rose through the ranks, first of WIMA GB, then to becoming the second international president. Throughout this time, I was conscious of those women who had paved the way for us all, braving indifference and hostility to be themselves and to actively participate in the sport they so loved: motorcycling. I felt my own journey was not so different – motorcycling and WIMA have given me freedom, independence, self-reliance, wonderful friends and travel experiences all over the world and my life partner Pat. This is why I feel it is so important to capture this information for future generations of women motorcyclists. It's my way of saying thank you.

I want to say an especial thanks to Åsa, who rode to the rescue when I became overwhelmed by the enormous task I had set myself. Her organising skills, enthusiasm and commitment meant that this edition of our history has been completed. Without her, it would not have happened. Many, many others have also helped us both – acknowledgements can be found at the back.





Åsa Öhqvist, Co-Editor

I've been a member of WIMA since 2004. I actually found the organisation when looking for local women to ride with as I didn't know anyone in Gothenburg, where I had moved after university. While WIMA didn't give me local female riding friends, I soon found the international aspect and got hooked. In 2005, I worked at the European rally hosted in Sweden and the same autumn I travelled to New Zealand for the international rally and after that over to Australia connecting with WIMA members there. The international rallies became addictive, and

I try my best to attend every year. In 2016, I even quit my job to be able to attend in Estonia, but that is another story. The essence, though, is that I love the international friendship that I have through WIMA and the possibilities to see and explore places I might never have gone to otherwise.

My ethos is that if I benefit from an organisation, I want to give back, contribute and help the organisation grow. That is why I stood for international vice president in 2015, and later for international president. To give back and contribute to an organisation, that is very important to me and to help more people benefit from it.

When I passed on the leadership to Zara in autumn 2020, it was in order to use my spare time to pursue a career in linguistics. As a linguist, I love working with texts, so in December 2020 when Sheonagh asked if I could help her a bit with the editing for the book, I got really excited about this new way of contributing to WIMA. In addition, I was also naive; I thought that if I took a three-month study break, we could finish the book before the second half of the spring term started. Not only has the project grown over time, but the task proved to be far more difficult than first anticipated.

The rallies section has proved to be especially difficult. We are not only editors; we are also researchers, writers and detectives trying to find material from old motorcycle magazines and other archives since there are many rallies that are not recorded in our own divisional histories. Hundreds of hours have gone into this project, and it has been much more rewarding than I could ever imagine. I've learned so much, especially about the early years and the old rallies, and I am excited about the prospect of WIMA members all over the world reading about this soon too.



Louise Hillier, Book designer, 2024 edn



Motorcycles have always been a huge part of my life – I had my first at 16. Growing up in rural Cornwall, my little Yamaha DT50 was not only my transport but also my ticket to fun, freedom and independence.

In 1999 I became art editor/designer for *Motorcycle Sport and Leisure*. This was an absolutely dream job because not only was I able to redesign the magazine but I became their female bike tester, so I rode everything from Hondas to Harleys. It really was a case of ‘Lou, we need some miles put on this bike. Can you have it over the weekend and tell us what you think of it on Monday’. The testing led on to my own ‘Challenge Lou’ series, one of the highlights of which was training with the Royal Signal White Helmets and jumping through fire – that made the cover!

Sadly, *Motorcycle Sport & Leisure* was later sold and relocated to Cambridgeshire. So I then went travelling with my partner, both of us on Honda Dominator NX650s. Complete with tent, we rode all over the world (the USA, South and Central America, Australia, India, Europe and North Africa).

That wasn’t the end of my travels, as I also took a solo trip to Eastern Europe on a Triumph Bonnie and Watsonian Monza sidecar outfit – that was an eye opener, as I’d hardly ridden an outfit before. Still, with Sprocket my dog in the sidecar, I explored Europe on my own and camped all the way, covering 7500 miles – riding an outfit does wonders for your biceps!

I’m still designing motorcycle magazines, producing the monthly mag for the VMCC, and taking on the BMF’s magazine as a result of working with Sheonagh, who asked if I would join her on a project to design a book on WIMA’s history. I didn’t realise how big a project it would turn out to be and three years later the book was finished.

I am proud, very proud of it, and it’s great to see the WIMA’s history so well documented.

Caroline Lunnon, Book update, 2025 edn

I was thrilled when Sheonagh told me about her work on the WIMA history book project. The resilience, bravery, and tenacity of WIMA members has been consistently amazing me (to name just a few of the shining qualities), both past and present. However, it saddened me that I often learned about these remarkable women only through their obituaries. This realisation fuelled my passion for editing the WIMA GB newsletter. It became my way of contributing to the preservation of WIMA’s legacy, capturing the stories of its members and their achievements. I envisioned each newsletter not just as a resource for current members, but as a historical document that someone like me might read 50-75 years from now, pondering the thoughts and experiences of WIMA members.

The world has recently become aware of numerous instances where the contributions of women have been rediscovered after being largely forgotten or even erased from historical records. If we don’t take the initiative to document our own history, evidence suggests that the rest of the world is unlikely to do it for us.

When Sheonagh and Åsa accepted my offer to assist with the book, I wasn’t sure at first how I could contribute. However, when you believe in something happening and have the chance to help, you find a way. I began by translating mostly German articles and reports, digging through decades of newsletters entrusted to me by Sheila Whittingham for information, and compiling rally reports from records, reports, and invitations we uncovered. For the finished diamond jubilee edition, I researched and created timelines of national divisions and former officers, to complete those sections. I was also entrusted with the art of weaving the new national divisions, sections, and additional officer introductions into the book design created by Louise.

My hope for the next major edition is that it will be a lot quicker to put together, because we will have continued to collect and record, to preserve our legacy.





The first WIMA women...

Information is now widely available about Louise Scherbyn and Theresa Wallach, but we feel that Frances Popley's account of these two remarkable women in the 1980 history stands the test of time very well. Much of her information came from personal letters from Louise and Theresa written at the time, especially for that history. So, we present it here, slightly edited, together with some more photos that have come to light since, plus reminiscences from WIMA members who met them.

was a little worried about the effect riding would have on her reputation, as she was supposed to be 'ladylike' and 'dignified'. She held a good position in the Kodak company and wondered what the rest of the office would think of her 'putting about' in the city on a motorcycle!

Founder and First International President, Louise Scherbyn, 1903-2003

Frances wrote in 1980: Louise, as almost all members must by now know, is the founder of The Women's International Motorcycle Association. Without her, this book would never have been written and many of the events in it would never have taken place. Unfortunately, I have never met this remarkable and inexhaustible lady, but I do have a detailed account, written by her, of how the association began.

Louise's interest in motorcycling started in the early 1920s when she sat on a 1921 Indian, which was owned by a lad who came to visit her elder sister. A few years later, her brother bought an old Indian. In 1924 Louise had her first ride in a sidecar; at first, she was scared, but then found it great fun.

Years passed, Louise grew up and got married. Her husband started yearning for two wheels again as he had owned several machines before they met. So Louise became a pillion rider on a Harley Davidson. This was soon replaced by an Indian Chief and Louise once again had the pleasure of riding in a sidecar. In 1932 Louise's husband decided that because she was so keen on bikes, he would get her one of her own. The idea frightened Louise, as women riders were almost unheard of and she





Above: Louise's bike in the Wood Museum of Springfield History in Massachusetts

Above right: Louise's house in Waterloo 1986

Below right: (newspaper cutting) Louise demonstrating her riding skills at the first All Girls Motorcycle Show in the USA



Louise need not have worried; it was soon known that she had taken to two wheels and every Monday morning her colleagues would ask 'Where did you go this weekend?' She kept her good reputation and she and her husband joined the Kodak City Motorcycle Club and later the Wayne County Club. Soon Louise was active in many motoring clubs including the American Motorcycle Association, the Canadian Motorcycle Association and the British Pathfinders Club.

It was then that she became interested in women motorcyclists in particular. She joined, and helped to revive the Motor Maids, set up in the 1940s with various branches throughout America. It was not so much a motorcycle club, more of a display team. The girls in it used to do a formation ride around the track at the start of a race meeting. They wore smart blue uniforms, and their bikes were always beautifully turned out. Louise so much enjoyed the experience of getting The Maids together again that, when she moved back to Waterloo, she enlisted the assistance of another girl and formed the Waterloo Twilight Roamers Motorcycle Club. During the WIMA twentieth anniversary celebrations, Louise was presented with an honorary life membership of this club.

Louise's interest in motorcycle publications began with her riding, first with her attempts as a reporter of club news, then as a contributor of articles which appeared in several publications. She became the associate editor of one of America's leading motorcycle publications and *(Frances wrote)*, for the past fifteen years Louise has, of course, been the editor of the international edition of the WIMA newsletter which members receive each quarter.

Let's get back to Louise's riding. Louise's first machine was a 1932 Indian Scout. Her training ground was a gravel road; three lessons later, she was riding through city traffic. Since then, she has

been riding continuously on various models of Indian. In her many miles she has never had an accident! Her trips have taken her to many parts of the USA and Canada. She undertook her first long journey (1,200 miles/1,931 km) to Chicago in 1937. Louise believes that she can lay claim to the distinction of being the first American woman to reach the far north - the Temagami Forest of Canada. This was in fact rather more of a feat than it sounds. The trip was in 1937, when many main roads in Canada were still made of dirt and gravel and were





Above: Louise and Linda Bootherstone-Bick, 1983

Below: Widge's and Louise's family dine together in Waterloo, 1986



very rutted and rough. Louise also feels that she may have been the first American woman to compete in a foreign competition. In 1948 she rode in a 720-mile/1,159 km enduro in Canada. During this period Louise took part in many events, but her main love was touring.

During the 1940s, the number of women riders increased, and Louise believed that there should be more activities for them. Her belief in this grew stronger and stronger and she started thinking about a world-wide organisation of all women motorcyclists. It was during the second world war while Louise was exchanging correspondence with many women in various parts of the world, that she became obsessed with this new idea. Why not unite as a body, exchanging ideas, problems and advice? It would add considerably towards improving the atmosphere, the good companionship, and marvellous fun of competition and touring and all that is characteristic of the sport. She felt sure that others would agree with her. At this time, women abroad were competing in a wider range of events than in America and were doing well. Why? Mainly, Louise felt, light-weight motorcycles had proved their safety and easy handling among women riders. With the influx of these machines from abroad - here was an encouraging outlook. Why couldn't American women look forward to uniting and increasing their

opportunities in competitions as riders? Why couldn't women unite their interests into one big association? With this thought, came the initial step of founding The Women's International Motorcycle Association, in 1950.

Someone said to Louise at the time that this endeavour would be impossible! But Louise's love of the sport and her determination kept her going and she made it a possibility and then a successful reality. Once she had completed the groundwork, she enlisted the help of two of her friends, Mrs. Hope Jones and Miss Grace Conrad. So I suppose they could be called the first two WIMA members! I'll let Louise have the last words: 'With the help of every member and some wonderful friends, the WIMA has now grown today to be the largest women's motorcycle organisation in the world.'

Frances concludes: Here, with only limited space available and only ordinary words at my disposal I cannot think of a suitable tribute to pay to a woman, who was not only our founder but who has also devoted a lifetime to the association. Louise, a Big Thank You from all of us.

Current Members' Recollections

Linda Bootherstone-Bick stayed with Louise in summer 1983 and helped her get the international newsletter out. Linda was a GB member at the time and went on to found the WIMA Australia division (though Hazel Mayes was the first actual Australian international member).

GB members Widge Thorpe and Rose Wilbraham, plus Widge's husband and daughter visited Louise at her home in Waterloo, NY in August 1986. Louise made them very welcome, and they stayed overnight camping close by. *Widge recalls:* 'We had proudly worn our 'British Division' WIMA tee shirts, but Louise was indignant that anything other than official USA regalia in red, white and blue existed. Oops. She had strong views about a number of motorcycling issues - we decided it was diplomatic to just nod in agreement.

'We took Louise to a local diner for an evening meal before settling down for the night in the tents. The etiquette of American buffet eating was new to us. Louise happily tucked into plain fish with red jello to follow. Next day, before we left, Louise showed Rose and I a tea-chest half full of correspondence from all over the world that she needed to deal with. Her stay in hospital had caused a backlog. It was an interesting experience that I am grateful for. The culture of Louise's WIMA in the USA at that time was very different from ours in WIMA GB. The focus seemed to be on leading parades and wearing identifying regalia rather than riding the scenic roads of the country and meeting up at rallies as in the UK.'

Louise's health was declining by the time of Widge's family visit in 1986 and she spent the final part of her life in a retirement home in New York. Her 1940 Indian motorcycle, some clothing, her hat, and her lucky rabbit's foot are all on display at the Wood Museum of Springfield History as part of the Esta Manthos Indian Motorcycle Collection. Her collection of toy motorbikes and some correspondence are also archived there.

The book Iron Horse Cowgirls: Louise Scherbyn and the Women Motorcyclists of the 1930s and 1940s by Linda Back McKay and (WIMA USA member) Kate St. Vincent Vogl (www.katevogl.com), was published late 2023 by McFarland, USA.

First International Vice President, Theresa Wallach, 1909-1999



The following introduction to Theresa appeared in the American Weekly on 30th October 1949 and was reproduced in the Pearl Booklet:

'The sun-browned woman on a motorcycle waved down the cowboy who was riding fast in the opposite direction. 'I say there,' she called out as he pulled his horse up short in a cloud of dust. 'How far is it to the nearest town?' He gazed at her in amazement. 'Holy

mackerel, Ma'am,' he said. 'Are you alone, way out here in this desert?' She nodded laughing. 'But I'm alright. I've been all over the world alone - Africa, Europe and most of your United States.' 'Are you crazy, or rich?' he wanted to know. 'Maybe I'm crazy, but I'm not rich. I'm almost stone broke, but I'll pick up a bit of money some place, this is my transport.' She patted her bike. 'And I don't need much else.'

'What Theresa Wallach didn't mention, was that for such travel you need courage and ingenuity and a lively spirit of adventure. She has done what most of us only dream of doing - she's gone where and when she wanted to. A motorcycle champion, Miss Wallach has been travelling for years with all her worries left behind her and all her earthly possessions boiled down to what she can carry on her trusty motorcycle. First, she toured Europe. Then made the hazardous 10,000-mile (6,093 km) trip from Algiers to Cape Town, South Africa. In recent weeks she has travelled more than 25,000 miles (40,233 km) in the United States. Expenses are almost nil. She can go a long way on her motorcycle on a gallon of gas. She doesn't have to worry about hotel reservations or paying hotel bills. When she's tired, or sees an attractive spot, she pitches her tent for the night. Food is her greatest expense and when she runs low on money, she stops and gets herself a job. Sometimes she picks fruit or works on a farm or in a garage or gives lectures about her adventures on the road. She went to motor and aircraft maintenance schools in London and is a licensed mechanic both in England and in the United States. She can always pick up a job as a mechanic and with a few dollars she takes off again.'

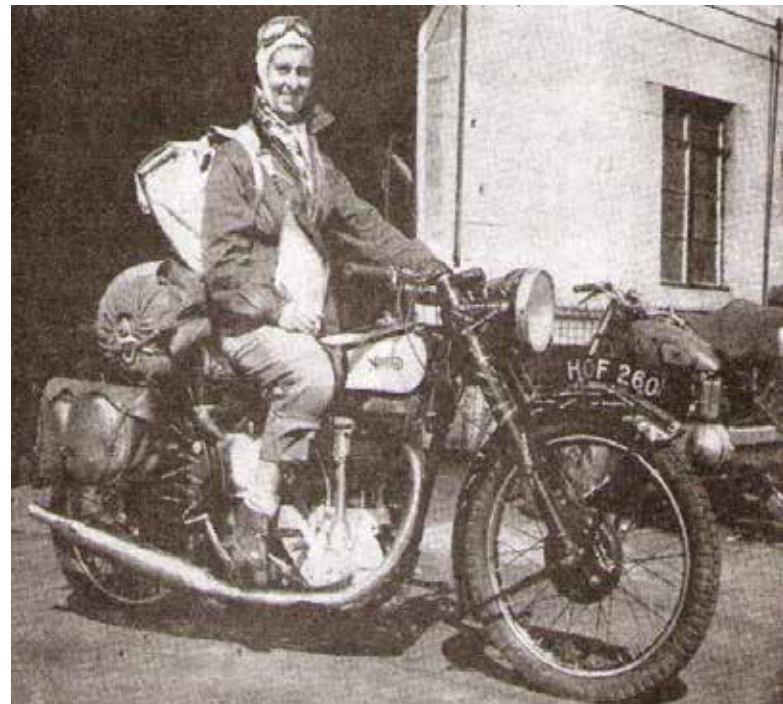
Frances Popley continues with a lengthy account of Theresa's amazing life: All sounds wonderful, doesn't it? I feel that Theresa needs no introduction at all; in many ways she is responsible for my sitting down at the typewriter now. For ages, every time I opened a book or talked to anyone about women motorcyclists, the name Theresa Wallach kept coming to me. I shall list a few of her incredible achievements here: one of only three women to be awarded a Brooklands Gold Star (the Gold Star was awarded to any rider who managed to lap the Brooklands racetrack in England at over 100mph/160kph), made the first crossing on

a motorcycle of the Sahara Desert, rode alone across America, started her own Norton importing business in America, wrote a book about learning to ride, started her own riding school, appeared on television, was one of the first women despatch riders in the Second World War and to cap it all from 1962 to 1977 she was international vice president of WIMA.

Theresa grew up in London. She used to watch the grown-up girls crowd out of the factories and rush off to queue for the cinemas and dance halls and Theresa used to shudder at the sight. 'That's not going to be the life for me,' she said to herself. She also said it to her parents who thought she was a bit odd. To them the only way to live respectably was to stay at home, find a husband and settle down to a life of cooking and needlework. Theresa knew that she couldn't do this. She told everyone that she was going to travel - to see Africa and the Sahara Desert, Hollywood, the Grand Canyon, New York and Paris.

She started doing something about this aim first by sneaking out on her brother's pedal cycle and teaching herself to ride. Later she stood staring wide-eyed at motorcycles instead of at boys. She had to fight quite a bit at home to get her way. Soon her parents found out that she was actually riding. In 1926, when she was seventeen, they told her that unless she settled down, she would end up as nobody's bride!

Between 1928 and 1932, Theresa studied engineering at the University of London and was an active member of a motorcycle club. She had competed in many types of sport, namely trials, scrambles and road racing. She felt she had the experience and confidence to look after a motorcycle in any circumstances. After another family argument about her life choices, Theresa went to her friend Florence Blenkiron's house where she found her friend equally upset. Some of her family had moved to Capetown, South Africa and she missed them very much. 'Cheer-up, said Theresa. 'Suppose we use my bike and go and see them.'





Frances concludes her piece on Theresa with: I want to repeat the very well-known story of how she achieved her Brooklands Gold Star in 1939. In his biography, Francis Beart, the ace Norton tuner, recalls how one day Theresa walked into his workshop at Brooklands and asked if she could borrow his 348cc International Norton for the next weekend's British Motorcycle Racing Club (BEMSEE) meeting. Francis Beart told her it would cost a fiver! She hadn't one, but returned later, having borrowed the money. When the day came, it was pouring with rain, but her lap was timed at 101.64mph! Theresa's was one of the last Gold Stars to be awarded before Brooklands was closed down by the War. Around this time, Theresa was a regular attendee at Brooklands along with her friends in the London Ladies Motorcycle Club in which she was a keen and active member.

Today (Frances wrote in 1980), Theresa is fully occupied with her riding school and has had to drop the position of WIMA's international vice president, held until 1977, a post which Louise has yet to fill. However, Theresa has by no means hung up her helmet. She still makes occasional tours on her Honda 500/4 or uses one of her 100cc Kawasaki 'trainer' bikes for local trips. She lives in beautiful Arizona, on the doorstep of the Grand Canyon. She tells me the only way to penetrate the ramparts of the Grand Canyon is by mule! So, one fine day, Theresa hired such a beast, called 'Daisy' and rode the vertical mile down a three-foot ledge to the Colorado river! At the moment, (when not working in her riding school), Theresa is writing a book about her many adventures. Hurry up Theresa we can't wait.

Current Members' Recollections

Sheila Whittingham, a GB member (and the first WIMA International historian), who travelled to the US, has added her memories of Theresa. 'In 1995, I wrote to her before our trip and received a very friendly letter. She gave us directions and we spent a nice afternoon with her. She was very welcoming and gave us tea and biscuits - I remember a packet of real English ginger biscuits complete with a union jack emblem on the packet. She showed us her Gold Star and other photos and gave me two lovely gifts to take home, a signed copy of her book (Easy Motorcycle Riding) and a picture of a Navaho kachina doll, both of which I still have.' Sadly, Theresa didn't want her photograph taken and was more interested in finding out about Sheila's life and travels than talking about herself!

Sheonagh Ravensdale's postscript to the 1980 history: Theresa remained an active member of WIMA GB throughout her time in the USA, eagerly reading the monthly GB newsletter posted to her in Phoenix, until her death on her 90th birthday in 1999. As captain of WIMA GB from 1993 to 1998, Sheonagh recalls getting regular letters from Theresa commenting on the newsletter, often complaining about the language in it! Theresa never managed to get the incredible tale of the Africa trip published during her lifetime. That task was taken up by editor Barry Jones of Panther Publishing after she died and 'The Rugged Road' was published in 2001 to immediate acclaim. A second edition with updated information was published in 2011. Theresa had made a 16mm cine film of the journey and gave many presentations using this footage during her travels in the USA. A video made from the film footage was launched in the UK around the time of the first edition of the book. You can see it here: <https://www.brooklandsmuseum.com/explore/stories/brooklands-stories/from-brooklands-to-phoenix-arizona-via-capetown>.

In 2003, four years after her death, Theresa was inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame. Because of 'The Rugged Road', Theresa is possibly better-known internationally than Louise, but both women have been an inspiration to us all ever since we first discovered them early in our riding careers. When travelling in remote places, with problems on the road, Sheonagh has found herself muttering 'Now what would Theresa do?'

WIMA – OUR story from 1950 to the present day

We aim here to highlight some aspects of the early days in WIMA and to juxtapose them with our current organisation to give a contemporary context. The purpose is to give you an overview and set the scene for the following chapters.

The Pearl Booklet states that 'W.I.M.A. was formed in America in 1950 by Louise Scherbyn: the first members to the Association were Hope Jones, Grace Conrad and Elvira Eibling' and adds that 'The idea of such an organisation came to Louise during the Second World War when she was corresponding with women all over the world'. What started over 75 years ago as one woman's vision has now grown into a truly global organisation with divisions on six continents. All our current divisions and their national presidents are introduced in the national divisions chapter.

The original aims of WIMA were 'to promote international understanding and cooperation and to provide a platform for women to get together to share experiences, problems and ideas and to encourage their involvement in competitions'.

The first constitution can be read in full in the Pearl booklet, but ARTICLE II - OBJECT and ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP are of special interest as by comparing them to our current constitution, we can see that little has changed in the original intention and purpose of WIMA.

ARTICLE II – OBJECT (first)

The object of the Association shall be in the interest of improving and promoting activities, goodwill and sportsmanship of women enthusiasts in the motorcycle world.

The current international constitution has expanded a bit on Article II to also include the promotion of wellbeing in general but apart from that, the initial object remains the same:

ARTICLE 2: OBJECTIVES (2022)

The objective of WIMA International is to improve and promote activities, advancement, goodwill and friendship amongst women motorcycle enthusiasts from around the world. WIMA aims at using the common interest of motorcycling to promote the well-being of women in general. The Association is conducted independently of any personal interest.

The first constitution has the following to say about membership:

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP (first)

Section 1. The membership shall be comprised of Units and their Divisions representing the various continents and countries. There shall be no discrimination of race, creed or colour.

Section 2. There shall be a Driver's Class and a Passenger Rider's Class.

A. DRIVER'S CLASS. Membership shall consist of a woman who can safely operate a motor cycle. It will not be essential to own a motor cycle, candidates must be of legal age required by her own community driving laws. She must possess a driver's licence.

B. PASSENGER'S CLASS. Membership shall consist of women who ride as passengers or who are enthusiastically interested in some phase of motorcycling. She must be at least sixteen years of age.

Section 3. Candidates must be of good character. Section 4.

Candidates must submit their request for membership on the provided official Membership Application form.

Section 5. Honorary Members. Members shall consist of women chosen for their noteworthy endeavours throughout the field of motorcycling.

Section 6. Scooter enthusiasts shall be accepted into membership.

Today, membership is obtained by contacting the national president of the country you live in and one of WIMA's strong points is that there must be no discrimination – WIMA always was and still is for ALL women interested in motorcycles. We are proud that WIMA doesn't discriminate against pillion riders, but that they are eligible for full membership. The interest in motorcycles is the common factor.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP (2022)

There will be two categories of membership

1. Honorary Lifetime Membership, to be known as Honorary Membership

2. Standard Membership, to be known as Membership

1. Honorary Lifetime Membership may only be awarded as part of an award of Special Recognition.

2. Standard Membership of WIMA International will be open to all National Divisions subscribing to the rules and objectives of the Association and paying the annual subscription, the amount to be decided each year by the International Council of National Presidents.

As you can see, the membership rules have gone through slight changes through the years and have adapted to the way WIMA is run now, through national divisions. To date, the only members who have Honorary Lifetime Membership are Hayley Bell and the admins of the Women Riders World Relay (WRWR). You can read about WRWR in the chapter for WIMA Special Recognition. All other members are members through their national division. Until 2023, the national divisions paid a fee of 0.5 euros per member to WIMA International. This exceptionally low fee had remained the same since WIMA International was officially established in Europe over two decades ago, thanks to the tireless efforts of its ongoing team of volunteers. This has now been increased to 1.0 euro per member in order to start a support fund whereby national presidents can apply for a grant of up to 500 euros, to enable a member who could not otherwise participate in an international rally to attend.

In ARTICLE IV, the original term captain became president in the early 2000s, a neutral term with no military links.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS (first)

Section 1. Officers shall be the International and the Divisional classification.

A. The elected officers shall be the International President, International Vice President and the Divisional Captains.

B. The appointed officers shall be Divisional Assistant Captains and other officers deemed necessary.

C. The International Council of Officers shall consist of the Founder, International President, International Vice President and the Division Captains.

Little by little, WIMA spread to other countries; communication was by post and therefore took time. It is therefore impressive that 'by 1952, there were both individuals and small WIMA groups in seven countries. Those members outside America were given associate status only; they paid no dues and had no voting rights' (Pearl Booklet). Much was achieved in just two years.

Today, all national divisions are run independently under the umbrella of WIMA International, and the national presidents are part of the International Council of National Presidents (ICNP). Together with the international president, they govern WIMA International. This system was established towards the end of the 20th century and Sheonagh Ravensdale was appointed the second international president in 1997. She was followed by Rita Koopmanschap, Angela Trevaskis, Claudia Fehrer, Åsa Öhqvist and Zara Strange our current international president. You can read their introductions in the international presidents' section and the section on WIMA officers.

Working alongside the international president are the international vice president and the treasurer. A team of women also provide support in public relations, social media, merchandise, the history archive and the website. See more about these volunteers and the work they do in the WIMA International officers' section. The current set up is in stark contrast to the early days, when everything was run by Louise Scherbyn, first alone and later together with the first vice president, Theresa Wallach.

WIMA has a history of supporting different causes

Louise was always organising different projects and charity events for the members to take part in. The following example is from the WIMA NEWS winter 71/ spring 72:

'BUTTONS NEEDED - HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN to send a button, a few or more, to help the American-Canadian Division along on their Button Project? It was hoped a picture could be made of buttons from all or many of the countries represented in WIMA. There is still time to help. Surely everyone must have some buttons to donate. Buttons must be flat and colored.'

WIMA is still involved in many different projects on a national and international level. MJ Piki, the first women-run motorcycle-taxi and dispatch service in Tanzania, is WIMA International's current officially-supported organisation. In addition, many national divisions also run their own local charity project, for example the street kids project in Estonia and Save the Earth in Japan to name just a couple. You can read more about MJ Piki and other humanitarian work by different divisions, in the Supported Organisations section.

WIMA NEWS probably originally started around 1962 -

the first newsletter in the archives is dated June 1963. Four editions per year were co-produced by Brenda Alderson, from the British division and Louise Scherbyn.

'At that time, it took the form of a quarterly magazine. Brenda would prepare the drafts (from material sent to her by Louise), mail them to Louise, who would edit and approve them and would post them back to Brenda to type, duplicate, staple and send out! Later the latter process was taken over by an American member who had a printing business. In those days the entire WIMA membership amounted to some 200.'

These were lively newsletters with articles and letters from members around the world – the whole of Autumn 1964 is devoted to the vexed issue of women being banned from racing – successful WIMA racers had their licences withdrawn at no notice with the feeble excuse that racing was dangerous and accidents by women would bring racing into disrepute. Louise wrote numerous letters to the various authorities protesting the decision. Other newsletters detailed the hardy exploits of the women who rode to and camped in the snow at the Dragon Rallies in Wales and the Elephant Rallies on the continent. One issue mentions that Peggy Iris Thomas, author of *Gasoline Gypsy (also published as A Ride in the Sun)* was a former WIMA member. After decades out of print, the book is now available again.

To this day, many National Divisions produce a WIMA newsletter. It used to be sent out in paper form, but is now done digitally, and WIMA International revived the concept of an



international newsletter from 2021 to 2024. The newsletters contain material sent in by the members and reflect the activities going on. Not much has changed in this respect!

The following WELCOME TO WIMA article, written by Brenda Alderson, was published in WIMA News in the summer of 1968. In it she describes some of the early details of the organisation. Including some details and names that would easily have been forgotten otherwise.

WELCOME TO WIMA

by Ass't British Capt. B. Alderson.

Now that you, as a new member, are one of us and have not yet been in contact with the officers or missed copies of our WIMA NEWS you may want to know a little more about the Association.

Some early details of organization. WIMA was founded in the UNITED STATES in 1950 by MRS. LOUISE SCHERBYN one of the most well known women in AMERICA since 1933 for her many and varied undertakings in the sport of motorcycling. She has been our International President since our formation. Three other AMERICAN women HOPE JONES (CONNECTICUT), GRACE CONRAD (NEW YORK) and ALVIRA EIBLING (OHIO) all teamed with the founder to help develop WIMA during the early years. Membership became organized first into Units (AMERICAN, CANADIAN, EUROPEAN, AUSTRALIAN and NEW ZEALAND). All members except the AMERICAN Unit were Honorary-Associate members and there were no dues until 1959 for these members. During these 9 years WIMA was solely supported by the AMERICAN members. At this time 17 countries were represented in the various Units. With this progress the Units expanded in 1959 into our present Divisions. All members became Regular members. The first Captain to be appointed in the BRITISH Division was MRS. MURIEL SCOTT (ENGLAND) and MRS. JOPY VAN DINTER (HOLLAND) in the CONTINENTAL Division. The BRITISH Division has changed Captains several times and this change has occurred twice in the CONTINENTAL Division since 1959 to the present time. The AMERICAN-CANADIAN Division and the AUSTRALIAN-NEW ZEALAND Division have each had one Captain in the past two years. The Captains in co-operation with the Int. President and Founder are the leaders of their Divisions.

Objects. The objects of the Association as stated in the Constitution shall be in the interests of improving and promoting activities, goodwill and sportsmanship of women enthusiasts in the motorcycle world. We have done that well.

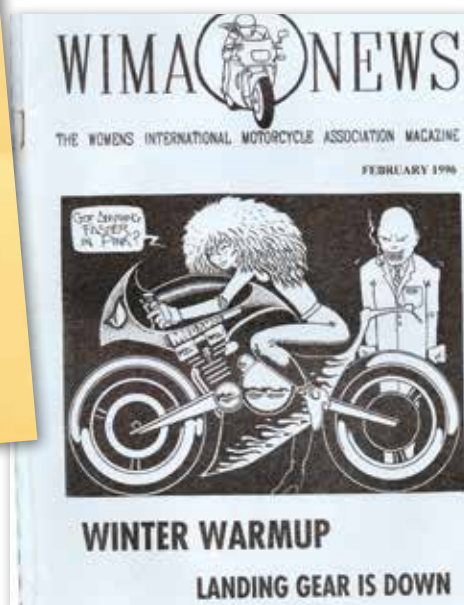
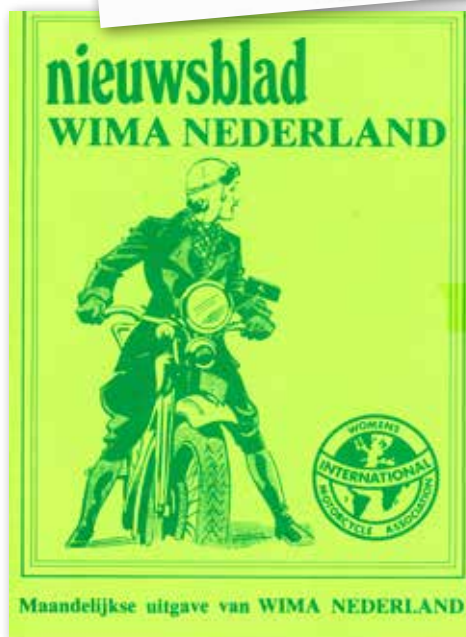
Activities. Annual Rallies, smaller gatherings and meetings each year by the BRITISH and CONTINENTAL Divisions and they have provided all sorts of fun and competition to everyone with members attending from various countries. Various contests held each year have created much interest and enjoyment otherwise women never would have had anywhere. This year the AMERICAN-CANADIAN Division will hold their first Rally. Trophies and other awards have been numerous each year since 1951. In 1952, 58 members received gold and white Ribbon Awards for their activity besides other trophies for varied outstanding endeavors. MOLLY BRIGGS, THERESA WALLACH, LIDA ABRAHAMOVA and BERNICE RAMSEY were among the early members to receive the first trophies.

Information source. A Newsletter originated and compiled by MRS. BRENDA ALDERSON (ENGLAND) in 1962 and was mimeographed quarterly by MRS. HILARY ELEY (ENGLAND). In this Newsletter appeared our official news, announcements, articles and many other interesting features submitted by our officers and members in every country. The Newsletter continued to progress until it developed into WIMA NEWS in 1964 as our printed magazine you read today. With LOUISE SCHERBYN as its Editor, MARGARET and BARRY RYERSON as Publishers, BRENDA ALDERSON as Circulation Mgr., and all WIMA members and officers who contribute their news and photos this little publication has become an endeavor to be well proud of by the Association. A Captain's Newsheet is also assembled for members in the BRITISH Division by Captain MAUREEN WILLIS and printed by JEAN SEAR. Letters between officers and members increase friendship and add still more interest among each other.

Insignia. WIMA has its own insignia designed by our Founder in 1951. This circular shaped insignia has its Association colors - blue, white and red, and appropriately designed depicting the globe. From this colorful design we have cloth badges, metal pins and paper transfers all available at a reasonable fee from your Captain.

Finally, you will find a heart-warming welcome at the home of every WIMA member in every country whether you are in need or have just called for a chat or a visit.

WIMA has progressed the sport of motorcycling among women everywhere in the world. Isn't it wonderful we have such an organization for all women to be united together in this sport?



The following is from the winter 1967 newsletter, reproduced in the Pearl Booklet:

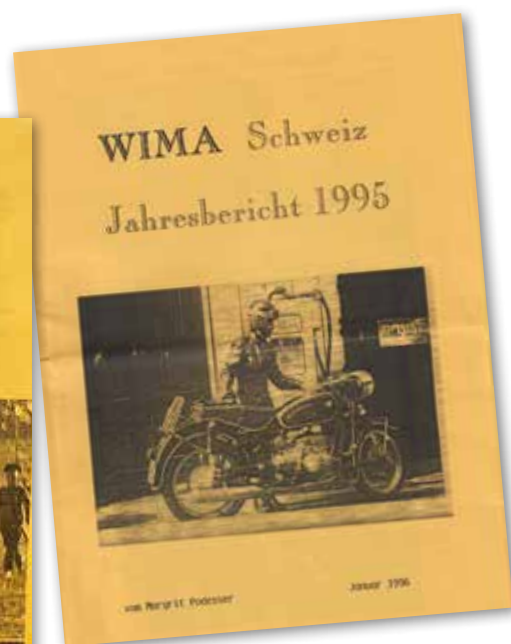
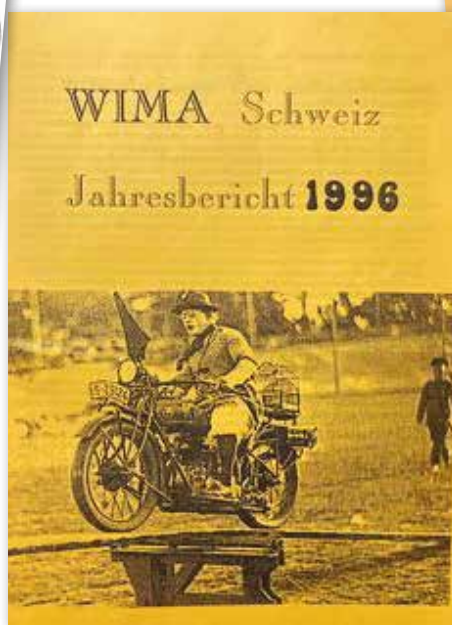
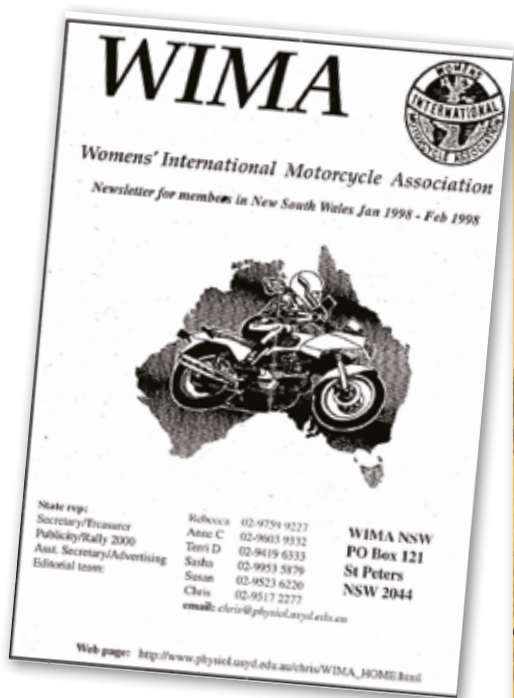
WHAT WIMA (INTERNATIONAL) MEANS TO YOU

- I** **INTEREST** in motorcycling.
- N** **NICETY** of winning trophies from other countries.
- T** **TOPS** the motorcycling sport for ladies.
- E** **EVERY** member can share in the activities, competition and fun.
- R** **REASONABLE** fees for all.
- N** **NEVER** any discrimination of any sort.
- A** **ACQUAINTANCE** with lady enthusiasts throughout the world.
- T** **TRIALS**, Rallies, Road Runs, Moto-Cross, Field Events, Search Runs, Fox Hunts, Orientation Runs, Group Tours, Special Awards and Honors, a variety of contests and many more events make fun activities.
- I** **IS** always ready to further the sport of motorcycling.
- O** **ONLY** organisation of its kind in the world.
- N** **NEWS** and business and social matters of the organisation published quarterly in our own WIMA NEWS publication.
- A** **ALL** year round enjoyment, not just for a few months of the year.
- L** **LADIES** membership only.

A fantastic summary of WIMA made by Louise Scherbyn well over 50 years ago and those currently familiar with WIMA will recognise these features in our organisation today. The strong focus on no discrimination and an organisation for all women on all types of bikes has been mentioned before and is strongly anchored in our current constitution.

In addition to the newsletter, nowadays, we have the website and different social medias such as Facebook pages and groups, Instagram, Linked In and different chat channels, which are used to stay in touch with our international friends. In 2020, during the Coronavirus pandemic, the International Council of National Presidents held its first national presidents' meeting online, via Zoom. These meetings have traditionally been held at the international rallies each year, with the introduction of a hybrid meeting in Finland 2018. The embrace of digital communication channels helps with decision making, helps the divisions to stay connected, and improves democracy, as it is easier for national presidents to participate in the discussions.

The international rallies are seen as the lifeblood of the organisation and a highlight for many members. The yearly possibility to travel to a foreign country and spend an activity-packed few days, together with international motorcycle friends is what makes WIMA different from many other motorcycle groups. While the Pearl Booklet mentions the newsletter as responsible for holding the organisation together in the early days, it must be said that the rallies are of equal, if not greater importance - although they were initially a purely European activity. The first international rally was held in



1958 in the Netherlands, Scheveningen and these rallies have been held every year since then, with only three exceptions: 1962 when pregnancies and child births prevented it and 2020 and 2021 when the Coronavirus pandemic made gatherings impossible.

Founder of WIMA France, Agnès Acker, wrote this in the Pearl Booklet, 'Every year, the Continental division meets for a week during the summer in a European country, ranging from around the polar circle to beyond the 'iron curtain', bringing anxiety amongst the populations curious, as well as wary, of these wild women on their motor bikes. They must surely be dirty and of doubtful morality!'

Details of as many rallies as we have been able to gather information on are in the WIMA International rallies section.

Songs have filled an important role at the rallies, both for entertainment and the very popular campfire. Over the years numerous songs have been composed and/or performed at the WIMA rallies. We have dedicated a section for the WIMA songs that we've been able to collect and reproduce.

The growth of WIMA soon led to the need for an organised structure in Europe in addition to the USA. In her account, Agnès Acker mentions the Continental division. When WIMA was first established in Europe, it consisted of the British division and the Continental division. The first newsletter we have in the archives (June 1963) lists Jopy Deijs-van Dinter as captain of the Continental division which was made up of members from various countries in mainland Europe. The captain of the British division was Brenda Alderson who was also the newsletter editor.

According to the Pearl Booklet in 1980, 'The Continental division of WIMA is less of an organised association than its British counterpart; it has no regular newsletters or small gatherings. However, it has an annual rally to which members from all over Europe flock. This rally usually lasts a whole week and encompasses a wide variety of riding competitions and social activities.' See the rally section for full details.

Over time, country divisions formed in Europe and WIMA

continued to spread all over the world, one continent at a time. New Zealand and Australia are first listed as one division in the Autumn 1966 newsletter with Audrey Henderson as captain. The first country in Asia to establish a WIMA division was Japan in 1996. The Pearl Booklet records that WIMA South Africa was established in 1971 and the founder was Lil Collett. This division was later lost and sadly no links remain. You can read an introduction in the National Divisions section. Later advancements have re-established WIMA on the African continent, as well as making the organisation truly international: the first Arab countries to join WIMA were United Arab Emirates and Morocco in 2019. In 2020, WIMA Mexico was founded, becoming the first division in Latin America and soon to be followed by Nicaragua and Panama. See the national divisions section for full introductions of all our divisions.

Early membership numbers are a reproduction of what Frances Pople collected from newsletters and presented in the Pearl Booklet. She says that there was no way of cross-referencing them as there were no official records held. The same is true for a large portion of WIMA's history. At large, records state if membership fees are paid but not how many members each division had. Only the last few years have records with membership numbers recorded for each division which we can compare with these early numbers. We must also bear in mind that in the early 70s, there were no actual national divisions, as such (for the most part, there were only individual members in different countries), so that the early numbers only indicate the country of origin for the WIMA members.

Membership numbers 1968: 107 members	
Country	1968
America-Canada	15
Britain	50
Germany	20
Rest of Europe	18
Australia/New Zealand	4

Membership numbers 1969: 123 members, 15 countries 1972: 197 members, 18 countries		
Country	1969	1972
America	15	60
Canada	3	3
Britain	61	59
W. Germany	22	18
E. Germany	2	2
Denmark	1	1
Belgium	3	3
Holland	2	2
Switzerland	2	1
Austria	1	1
Czechoslovakia	2	2
France	2	8
Spain	1	1
Australia	3	2
New Zealand	3	3
Sweden		20
Italy		6
Finland		5

Membership numbers 2022: 2872 members, 40 countries 2024: 3841 members, 38 countries		
Country	2022	2024
Australia	34	24
Austria	32	33
Bangladesh	10	10
Belgium	49	38
Bulgaria	69	148
Canada	1	46
Curaçao	7	7
Denmark	68	79
Estonia	19	20
Finland	217	340
France	82	80
Germany	323	324
Ghana	11	9
Great Britain	227	320
Greece	12	-
India	20	40
Iceland	1	15
Italy	86	140
Japan	37	45
Korea	23	15
Liechtenstein	13	18
Lithuania	42	25
Luxembourg	4	3
Malaysia	25	20
Morocco	20	15
Mexico	32	20
The Netherlands	72	60
Nepal	27	56
Nicaragua	10	20
New Zealand	6	6
Norway	680	1050
Pakistan	7	11
Panama	1	-
Poland	4	4
Romania	105	110
Sweden	39	56
Switzerland	51	46
United Arab Emirate	1	1
Ukraine	7	7
USA	400	580



Divisions have waxed and waned in numbers over the years, and the progress has not always been steadily upwards. France, for example, which was growing strongly in the early years, disappeared completely in the early 2000s and was later revived and is now a very active division. Spain shows one member in the early years and did indeed have a small division in the 1990s and hosted an international rally, but then

disappeared completely. Denmark had just one member back in 1969, but has recently launched an up-and-coming division. Norway has come from nowhere to head the league at 1050 members in 2024, extraordinary when you consider how short the riding season is in the far north of Europe. And the USA makes a welcome return. See the national divisions chapter for a full introduction to all our current and past countries.

Celebrations and milestones have been celebrated in major and minor ways throughout the years. No doubt there are more examples for which we have no information. The Pearl Booklet relates the WIMA 20th anniversary which was celebrated in style in New York (you can read the full description in the Pearl Booklet) and also in the rallies section:

'Our president looked wonderful behind the birthday cake with as many as twenty national flags of the countries represented in the Women's International Motorcycle Association. Louise was dressed in her WIMA blue uniform with colourful insignia on her left sleeve. Seated at her right and left side respectively were Vice-President Theresa Wallach, who had ridden her BSA Royal Star 650 miles from Chicago and American-Canadian Division Captain Faye Rickert who had ridden as passenger with her husband, Martin, on their big Harley Davidson from Meadville. Pioneer rider Mrs. Fay McConn sat at one end of the top table, and pioneer Mrs. Mary James at the other end, had come more than 3000 miles from Palo Alto. They made everyone feel proud of the spirit of WIMA.'

There have only been two main logos in WIMA's history. The first was round, designed at a very early stage, and reproduced on newsletters and letterheads. A metal badge produced by GB was very popular – bags of them would be taken to international

rallies in the 90s for sale to rally participants.

Then in the early 2000s, after huge discussion for more than two years, with many designs being submitted, the traditional logo was updated to an oval shape to include Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

For the 30th anniversary, the Pearl Booklet was created by Frances Popley, with the round logo in pride of place on the front cover. For the 60th celebration, a patch was made with a special logo.

The 70th celebrations which were supposed to be held at the international rally in Germany were postponed to the following year and then postponed again, due to the Coronavirus pandemic. An anniversary logo was created through a members' competition and the national presidents voted on their favourite design.

Like many clubs, WIMA divisions have produced their own regalia and memorabilia for decades. Special items such as logo'd t-shirts are regular giveaways at the international rallies. Samples of these are stored with the WIMA historian.

This latest history, is but a chapter in the life of WIMA – the only organisation of its kind in the world....



60th anniversary patch designed by Jan Duke, WIMA GB



70th anniversary logo designed by Susi Metzner, WIMA Germany



75th anniversary logo designed by Siân Davis, WIMA GB



25th anniversary medal, gifted to the WIMA archive by Johnny at usblues.com



40th anniversary celebrations were held in several countries: this is Wales

WIMA DAY

On **WIMA DAY** we come together to celebrate our sisterhood of riders worldwide.

Women, girls and ladies of all ages and walks of life ride together – in person or virtually – in this **International** event.

We ride all kinds of **Motorcycle** and everyone is included in our **Association**.

Share our WIMA Spirit – come ride with us!

Share our WIMA Spirit – come ride with us!

WIMA DAY is celebrated every year on the third Sunday of May by the Women's International Motorcycle Association (WIMA). On this virtual international event, we bring together women motorcyclists from all around the world to ride in unity – be it alone or together – in recognition of the passion for motorcycling that connects us, and all the women before us that got us here. We encourage women riders to hit the road and share their WIMA DAY experiences through social media and other platforms.

Purpose

The primary purpose of WIMA DAY is to promote camaraderie and empowerment among women riders by sharing a ride out with our international friends. The event is not just about riding; it's also about building a strong, supportive community. We want to inspire all generations of women to take up motorcycling and be part of our sisterhood!

Message

Women riders are everywhere and we're here to stay! Our aim is to break stereotypes, promote gender equality, and showcase the skills and passion of women motorcyclists. The day is a celebration of diversity, resilience, and the unifying power of motorcycling.

A WIMA DAY has been celebrated by WIMA GB for a few decades, and in 2016 the idea was picked up by the international council with the goal to promote international activities of WIMA members and with materials submitted to a contest.

The motto was 'Ride with WIMA Ladies', with the contest asking for members to submit photos and videos through the WIMA World Facebook group and also the website. Videos submitted can be found on the WIMA World YouTube channel.



Above: WIMA DAY ride in GB 2017 - photo credit Liz Robinson



Above: WIMA DAY ride, photo from WIMA India



Above: WIMA DAY video competition winners WIMA Germany



Above: WIMA GB South West ride-out and book club



Above: WIMA Sweden on tour



Above: 3rd WIMA DAY video entry, WIMA BAM Belgium



The fourth WIMA DAY - **The pandemic edition: 'Stay in'** - members were asked to send in their best, funniest and most emotional photo of any international WIMA rally.



Above: Photo taken during our national gathering in Orange in May 2019. I had decided to wear this t-shirt which was offered to us by the women of WIMA BANGLADESH, to thank them for this gift and also to be present with us by this thought, photo for the contest. I even put the Bangladesh flag on my motorcycle for the parade. - Marie, WIMA France



Above: WIMA Japan was my furthest and most exciting WIMA. The Japanese WIMA women brought us closer to their country and culture with a wonderful program. One of the highlights was riding a motorbike with Mount Fuji in view. This is what I will always carry in my heart. - Andi, WIMA Germany



Above: This picture was taken during the national rallye 'WIMA FRANCE' in September 2018. I chose this picture because of the good atmosphere. It was the second national rallye 'WIMA FRANCE' after the takeover of the association, and it was a real success. With many riders from all over Europe, with stunning scenery, beautiful mountain road for riding and a lovely sun. - Aline, WIMA France



Above: Here's our contribution, from the Dushi WIMA Rally on Curaçao of April 2020. Top left is WIMA gift for King's Day Ride with four international participants; bottom left is minister with NP and vice president at the opening dinner; top right are gifts from WIMA Switzerland; bottom right is our Dushi WIMA Rally Farewell cake. - Rita, WIMA Curaçao

WIMA National Divisions



WIMA Australia was there at the beginning – Hazel Mayes of Sydney was invited by founder Louise Scherbbyn to become the first international member of WIMA. Very little is known about WIMA Australia from the mid-fifties, and it faded away in the late sixties or early seventies. Hazel Mayes was an honoured guest at WIMA's 50th birthday celebration, at Kiama, Sydney in April 2000. The national president and committee are elected at the annual general meeting, held in a different state each year, to acknowledge the national nature of our membership. A quarterly newsletter, ride calendar, mid-winter dinner and members welcome to attend quarterly committee meetings means an active membership.

I attend WIMA rallies internationally, WIMA events at home, and other bike rallies year round in Australia. I also work as a volunteer at the MotoGP and World Superbikes at Phillip Island. Having a great committee helps me with this. Australia is huge.



Since then, I have been to rallies in Japan, GB Lancashire, Switzerland, Poland, Estonia, GB again in Castleton and France, representing Australia as the national president at most. I can't imagine my life without bikes and all the different aspects of it that I have enjoyed: touring, sidecar racing, instructing and licence testing, WIMA and our rallies, three terms as national president for a total of 20 years and other WIMA executive positions.

As one of my T-shirts says 'A woman's place is on the road'.

Notable Members

Kathy O'Donnell

President since 2020

Bikes came into my life when I went for a ride on the back of a Laverda and we went over the ton i.e. 100 miles an hour plus. My first bike was a 90cc centrifugal clutch Honda which I rode to work. Its top speed was 35mph. I've been hooked on bikes ever since and currently ride a Triumph Sprint 1050. I joined WIMA in 1993 and as national president, I think it's important for women riders to stay in contact and to grow our membership.



Linda Bick (Bootherstone)

I learned to ride about 1963 on a sidevalve BSA C10L 250 and joined WIMA when I met Maureen Willis in Dover, England. The longest trip I did then was to the FIM rally in Moscow, behind the Iron Curtain on my 500 Triumph. I emigrated to Australia in 1969 before riding through Africa in 1974-5 and the USA in 1983 where I met Louise Scherbbyn. Returning to Australia, I restarted WIMA in 1984. I lived in Spain for 16 years and with other WIMAs organised the 2001 international rally, then rode from Germany to Australia on a DR650. My 70th was spent in Bolivia on a 125 Yamaha on a three-month trip which included Chile and Argentina. I've also published four books about my travels.

Moira Stewart

A friend introduced me to the newly re-formed WIMA in 1985 and I was the Victoria State Rep for WIMA from 1986 and national president from 1988-2000 when I handed over to Jennifer Killen to run the international rally in Kiama NSW.

Carmel Sanders

Carmel joined as member number 4, in 1984/5 but took the number 13 as nobody else wanted it. Learning to ride in 1980, aged 50, Carmel rode round Australia twice, across the Nullabor five times, up through the middle and over to Queensland. Carmel lives in Adelaide, aged 90 and is a keen user of social media, keeping us all entertained.



WIMA Australia contact details

Email: aunty.ratbag5@gmail.com

Facebook: WIMA Australia



WIMA Austria has been active continuously since 1996. The club brings together a diverse group of women from various backgrounds, all united by their shared passion for motorcycling. Members range from beginners to experienced riders, spanning different professions, age groups, and riding styles (on-road, off-road, racing, and touring). At the moment 35 members. The club organises regular activities, including monthly Stammtisch meetings in Vienna, ride-outs, and special events like the annual D.A.CH Meeting (a national gathering with members from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland), or participates in Ladiescamp (the largest all female training and experience event in Austria):

An increasing number of members is actively participating in the yearly WIMA International rallies.

WIMA Austria also host a WIMA DAY ride in May, and an annual Halloween and Christmas Ride.

In addition to rides and social events, WIMA Austria engages in charitable activities, such as supporting Ukrainian refugees and child cancer research.

In 2024, WIMA Austria hosted the 5th D.A.CH Meeting in Krakauschatten, a scenic location on the border of Styria, Carinthia, and Salzburg. The club remains active on social media, encouraging women of all skill levels to join and experience the camaraderie of riding together.

Notable Members

Chris-Maria Baumer

President since 2020

I started riding in 1987, during my college education in engineering. My first riding experience was along the iron curtain (border), so I learned off-road riding too. I then took a break - business career and children stopped my biking for a few years. In 2009, I rediscovered motorcycle riding again, and I bought a Kawasaki Versys 650. As always, when I am focused on something, I did it to the extreme. You name it: off-road racing, track races, skills training, tours, motorcycle repairs and so on. A lot of bruises still remind me of this.



My first WIMA contact was in 2015 when I visited the monthly Stammtisch for the first time and I was excited to hear stories about touring together and experiences during international rallies. Through my work for WIMA, I have tried to give back a little, be it currently as merchandise officer in WIMA International, as a guide for the new WIMA Austria tours and trainings that I constantly organise and now as WIMA Austria's president.

My goals: I learned a lot from the start of WRWR and brought this experience with me. It is important to know the needs of potential and current WIMA members and to give them an opportunity to live those. In Austria, motorcycling is purely a hobby, and not a necessity, so our focus is on having fun together and the adventure of constantly discovering new motorcycle areas.

As president, I have started to bring young blood into the organisation, so



that we can adapt more easily to new circumstances and be successful for another 25 years.

Jane Spiegel

President 2002-2020

Jane played a vital role in connecting Austrian members with the international WIMA network. She focused on fostering inclusivity and keeping members informed about rallies and events.



Uli Scholda

Uli was awarded the Ellen Pfeiffer Certificate of Honour in 2015 and is profiled in that section. The Austrians say that without Uli, there would have been no WIMA Austria.



WIMA Austria contact details

Email: president@wima-austria.org or info@wima-austria.org **Website:** wima-austria.org

Facebook: WIMA Austria **Instagram:** @wima_austria



WIMA Bangladesh

Bangladesh Women Riders Club, BWRC, was founded by Israt Khan Mojlish and started its journey in 2013 with only two members. It's the first and only women riders club in Bangladesh. It became WIMA Bangladesh in July 2016. It is dedicated to all women who ride and to those who are inspired to learn. We truly admire and pay homage to the pioneer women riders of yesteryear who came before us and had to overcome so many obstacles in order to ride.

We are also working towards the realisation of women's empowerment and gender equality — protecting our rights and improving the lives of women and girls on the ground. We have worked with ActionAid for '16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence' and we donate to support underprivileged children. We introduced SADP (Sexual Assault Defensive Programme) in Bangladesh and organised the first workshop on SADP where many women took part and learned the techniques.

Notable Members

Israt Khan Mojlish

President

I'm a computer engineer by profession. I was one of the first women to ride a bike in Bangladesh. I bought my bike in 2012 and I started Bangladeshi Women Riders Club in 2013. When I started, I noticed that not many other women were riding. There was simply no one to connect with in case I had a problem or issue. Moreover, back then, the barriers the women bikers had to face, the looks they had to endure from people and the way it affected their daily lives made riding quite a struggle. We would have to endure unwanted whistles and verbal abuse from middle-aged and old men.



Also, when it got dark and we had to ride through a narrow street, random male bikers would speed past very close to scare us and risk causing us to crash.

In our country, there is still fear and taboo about women riding bikes. I have this wish to get higher cc bikes of good quality. When such bikes become available in Bangladesh, I'm going to purchase one – I would love to go on a world tour on it as a Bangladeshi woman.

Rozen Mahmud

Vice-President

Rozen has been riding a bike for about 24 years. She started riding as a way to keep herself safe, as women travelling on buses often got harassed by male travellers. When she started riding there were no other women motorcyclists in Dhaka; she is a pioneer who continues to encourage other women to ride their own bikes.



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WIMA Belgium

The Belgian Amazon Motorclub (BAM) was founded in 1992 by four women bikers, as a result of the first women-only-ride ever held in Belgium, the Amazon Run. The membership has varied in numbers; currently we have 65 regularly riding members. We bring together women from all walks of life, with varying experience and riding preferences, and quite a few travel extensively, widening our horizons even more. In 2020, as a result of the Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) and much to our delight, some riders from the French speaking part of Belgium joined.

BAM became WIMA-BAM Belgium in 1997. During the first ten years, we continued to organise the annual Amazon Run. Now we focus on day rides in all parts of the country, weekends, sometimes in neighbouring countries, and motorcycle riding courses to improve safety in traffic and sheer riding skills, either on or off-road. We also organise First Aid courses, GPS and mechanic courses. Above all, these courses are always FUN!

Notable Members

Trui Hanouille

President 2000-2021

Immediately after starting to ride in 1993, Trui Hanouille's goals were twofold: combining her urge for travelling and motorbiking, and meeting other women riders. She joined the Amazons at once, and was handed over the presidency of the club in 2000 by Vera Daems. Like all members, she encourages others to improve riding skills and push boundaries, all the while keeping the

Trui (left) & Dimple from India (right)



warm solidarity at the core of the club. After two long overland motorcycle journeys to India with Iris Heiremans, and one with Gaea Schoeters through nine Muslim countries — resulting in the book 'Girls, Muslims & Motorcycles'— she set off as #elektrogirl on the first long distance journey on an electric motorcycle in 2015, from Belgium to Istanbul and back, refuting the prejudices of e-riding. In 2019, she participated in the record-breaking Women Riders World Relay, joining WIMA members in India and Bangladesh.

In 2021, Hilda Wauters took over as president of WIMA Belgium.

Vera Daems

President 1992-2000



Vera Daems, having founded the Belgian Amazon Motorcycle club - now WIMA-BAM Belgium - was the leader, the inspiration and driving force of the club. Ten years later, when she moved to Spain and later to Mozambique, she handed over the presidency to Trui Hanouille. On February 24th 2015, Vera died very unexpectedly from malaria. 'Let us comfort ourselves with the thought she realised ALL of her dreams, however crazy they were at times.' These were the words of her daughters, wife and friends.

Rita Verbeurgt

Rita was a core member from the very first hour. In the 1970s she won several national motocross championships. She was an excellent tour leader who knew

the countryside like the back of her hand. She later turned to four-wheel cart riding to be able to travel with her girlfriend in a wheelchair.

Pascale Sloomans

Pascale was Vera's right hand during the first ten years of the club's existence. In 2003, she took a professional motorcycle mechanic course and travelled the world, first on her own and later together with her wife.



Michele De Rese

Michele is one of our most skilled riders; she worked and studied hard to become a professional motorcycle instructor. She organises the club's courses and is part of the core team of BAM, along with Hilde Wauters and Trui Hanouille. For organising weekends, it's Hilde who is mastering the ropes.

Kim Van de Perre

Kim is a rider with strong perseverance, courage, patience and positive spirit. Her solo journey to Nepal, crossing Ukraine, Russia, Tajikistan, China and Pakistan, covering 25,000km over 6 months, inspires us all. Riding solo as a young woman already is a true challenge; the fact that she is deaf makes this an even greater achievement.

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to support them in any way and to be part of the team. Of course, my ongoing attempt to ride around the world solo on a Harley-Davidson is a great help in this work. I have ridden on four continents so far, Europe, Asia, Australia and South America, and more than 30,000 km. During my adventures I have met great female riders around the world, and I am more than ever passionate about women empowerment through motorcycles, which was my main motivation for starting this tour. During my world tour I met WIMA members in UAE, India, Malaysia and Australia. In addition, I was in touch with female riders from Nepal, Mexico and Canada before there were WIMA divisions there, so I felt like a real WIMA ambassador!

WIMA Bulgaria

WIMA Bulgaria was initially set up in 2015 after Violeta Ivanova travelled to the international WIMA rally in Sweden but the division has had a slow start as Violeta unexpectedly had to move to France. After six years she is back in Bulgaria and more motivated than ever.

In WIMA Bulgaria, our aim is to provide women riders with knowledge, skills, a supportive environment of like-minded friends and meaningful causes. And, of course, to build a network of female riders around the world, that is the main advantage for our members here. To date WIMA Bulgaria has 24 members and we are growing daily. We have a lot of activities planned, such as training days and celebration of International WIMA DAY and International Female Ride Day. This year, Bulgaria will take a part in Pétrolettes Rally for the first time - and WIMA Bulgaria is the leading organisation for it.

Our slogan is 'We can', because in Bulgarian, the abbreviation WIMA is МОЖЕМ and the meaning is a wordplay of 'we can'.

Notable Member

Violeta Ivanova

President since 2015

As a WIMA leader in Bulgaria my role is to inspire and unite women riders,



WIMA Bulgaria contact details

Facebook: WIMA Bulgaria

Instagram: @wima_bulgaria



enjoys riding in the BC Okanagan and Kootenay regions and has fond memories of off-road adventures in Baja California Sur. She's excited to explore her new home in Alberta and connect with other women riders locally and from around the world.

WIMA Canada

Back in the early days, WIMA members in Canada were part of the mother division, as we can see in membership records. Later there have been two earlier attempts to get a division started in Canada, firstly by Dianne Best and Angela Griffin in 2016 and later following WRWR in 2019 by Maria O'Reilly.

WIMA Canada President Sue Bossley participated in the Women Riders World Relay, riding the Canadian and African legs. Her involvement inspired her to join WIMA. Recognizing the absence of a Canadian WIMA chapter, she took the initiative to help bring this empowering community and international sisterhood to Canada. She has gathered together a team of like-minded motorcycling women in the diverse provinces and territories and has plans to spread the message of WIMA across this vast country.

Notable Members

Margaret Vatamaniuck, Secretary
Margaret (Marg) is a seasoned rider from Vancouver Island, Canada. She's deeply involved in her local motorcycle community and the Port Alberni Toy Run. Excited about WIMA's growth in Canada, she hopes to connect with other women riders, share experiences, and celebrate the two-wheeled life.

Charlene Jackson, Treasurer
Charlene is a seasoned rider with 19 years of experience. She's explored extensively across North America and Europe. With a strong background in municipal finance and HOG chapter treasurership, she brings financial expertise to WIMA.

Leslie Lavigne, Communications
Leslie is an experienced communications professional. She started riding at 40 and

Carol Fedor, Vice President

Carol's lifelong passion for motorcycles began in childhood. After years of riding and working in management, she transitioned to a full-time motorcycle instructor. She's the co-owner of ProRide Motorcycle Training and founder of HellaRider, a women-only motorcycle course. A versatile rider, Carol enjoys commuting, track riding, and long-distance touring.

Sue Bossley, President

Sue is a passionate traveler, rider and community advocate, and has been riding for just over a decade. She's the founder of Throttle West International Moto Festival and has led motorcycle tours in Canada and Mexico. Beyond her love for riding, she is passionate about animal welfare.



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WIMA Curaçao

WIMA Curaçao was founded in December 2011 by Chinka Olario, Ilona Schotborg and Rita Koopmanschap, and consists of a small group of enthusiastic female motorcyclists. There was no women's only association and many female riders were members of mixed groups. To ride with women only was very appealing and new riders liked gaining riding experience in a smaller and relaxed group of female riders. The opportunity of meeting women riders worldwide made it even more interesting to join WIMA. Locally we are a well-organised group of riders, with our constitution, board members and an activities calendar with various rides and activities..

We are 'the lucky ones,' being able to ride from beach to beach throughout the year, living in a tropical climate on the island of Curaçao. In the rainy period we prefer to leave our motorcycles at home, because the roads can get rather slippery. Most of the time, however, the sun is shining. We prefer to ride early-morning or late-afternoon, not to get a sunburn! There is usually plenty of wind, so we do not melt when we stop, but no Gore-Tex for us because we ride in jeans and T-shirts. So, no Gore-Tex for us but we do wear helmets on Curaçao.

Notable Members

Rita Koopmanschap

President since 2021

Rita is profiled in the Ellen Pfeiffer award section. When Majesse stepped down members decided Rita should take over.

Majesse van Boheemen

President 2020-2021

Majesse was born on Curaçao in 1964 and loves motorcycling. She rides a 650

Yamaha V-Star from 2005, which is her first motorcycle. 'As WIMA Curaçao NP I feel honoured and proud that we build up an international network of motorcycling women to share our girl power. It helps



break down the image of women not being able to ride motorcycles. Riding is totally appropriate for us! Until our Dushi WIMA rally, on Curaçao in 2019, I had not realised so many women from so many countries from all over the world were affiliated, riding and meeting up! Women of different ages, backgrounds, at different levels of experience riding all sorts of motorcycles, that is what appeals to me most about WIMA. I hope to get a chance to participate in an international rally elsewhere in the near future.'

Carin Mercera

President 2016-2019

Carin, a happy and extremely skilled rider, as a key figure helped organise the Dushi WIMA rally in April 2019. She rides a 2006 Harley Davidson Fat Boy.



Both Carin and Chinka are well-known lady riders in the wider Caribbean, where many islands annually celebrate their Flag Day to commemorate gained freedom and independence. Carin Mercera has also been a member of the local Easy Riders for many years. Carin always takes part in events like Flag Day Curaçao (July), Bonaire (September) and Aruba (March). Adventurously, Carin even travelled to Surinam, shipping and riding her bike there, accompanied by riders from Suriname (South America).

Chinka Olario

President 2011-2016

Chinka is an eager and skilled motorcyclist. She has always wanted to help others, to make them feel comfortable in whatever they are doing. When she met Rita Koopmanschap and heard about WIMA International, she knew this was an excellent opportunity for Curaçao to join by starting up WIMA Curaçao. Chinka loves riding her 1997 Yamaha Royal Star and has been a member of Easy Riders for many years. She is very active as volunteer officer in the local corps, which works together with the police force, helping maintain order and peace on the island.



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WIMA Denmark

WIMA Denmark was founded in June 2021 by President Cindie Johannesson and Vice President Karin Sjøberg, with Mona Rygaard supporting from the sidelines as a mentor, guide, and source of encouragement. From the very beginning, our goal has been to create an inclusive community for women who love riding motorcycles - whether they ride solo or are part of a club.

With an average of around 50 members spread across the country and an age range from under 30 to over 70, we are a diverse community where all women on two wheels are welcome. Our board consists of five members who ensure exciting activities throughout the year.

We meet for events such as the WIMA weekend, cake gatherings, communal dinners, parties, and motorcycle rallies. We compete in the Fidus Championship for our challenge trophy, and our kilometer counter tracks who rides the most.

For some of our members, WIMA Denmark is their primary club, while others see us as a supplement to an existing club or simply a friendly community they occasionally take part in.

We also offer various merchandise, including shirts, patches, and back patches, so our members can proudly display their affiliation.

Wherever we go, WIMA Denmark sparks admiration and interest - from both women and men. We are a strong community where camaraderie, the joy of riding, and mutual support are at the heart of everything we do.

#wimadenmark #youneverridealone'

Notable Members

Cindie Johannesson

President since 2021

I was introduced to the motorcycle lifestyle at the age of 16 and was immediately captivated by life on two wheels. Since 2008, I have been riding my own motorcycle and have experienced



firsthand how the shared passion for riding creates strong bonds between people.

I co-founded WIMA Denmark because I am passionate about the community and the core idea that we should support and help each other whenever we can. For me, it's not just about riding motorcycles - it's about the adventures, the experiences, and the strong connections we build along the way.

My goal with WIMA Denmark is to give members the opportunity to share the joy of motorcycling, embark on adventures together, and create a community where we support each other both on and off the road. Without our amazing board, none of this would be possible - together, we make a difference and build a strong community.

For me, WIMA is my club - a place where friendships are formed, where we inspire each other, and where we make a difference together.



WIMA Denmark contact details

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In the beginning, only our Finnish members – Kaija, Hanna and Anne – had bikes. There were a lot of photos and interviews for magazines and newspapers around these three bikes! As a founding member, Kaija was president in the early years but

received the Ellen Pfeiffer award in 2021 and is featured in that chapter.

Anneli Pille

President with longest tenure



WIMA Estonia

The idea of forming a women's club was born in the summer of 1998 during Jõgevatreff, Estonia's biggest annual international motorcycle meeting. A few women interested in riding bikes had the idea of founding a women's club. Neighbouring Finland already had a WIMA division and we found that the principles of WIMA were exactly what we wanted to promote: that you can ride a bike yourself, not have to stay at home or sit behind a man.

So, at the beginning of January 1999, Kaija Rytkönen wrote to the president of WIMA International, Sheonagh, that a bunch of women here in Estonia would like to join WIMA. On 15/01/1999, Sheonagh replied with a cheerful e-mail 'WELCOME WIMA ESTONIA!' We promptly registered formally with EMF (Estonian Motorsport Federation), created our national statutes and we were formally inaugurated at the international WIMA rally that summer.

At the time, the economic conditions in Estonia were so poor that buying your own bike was not easy, therefore the WIMA International principle that members should have an interest in motorbikes but are not required to own one was suitable.

she always wanted the president to be Estonian, so that we wouldn't be seen as a foreign women's club. Although we had few bikes, the enthusiasm was great; we organised events such as after-parties at the bike show and yearly meetings with WIMA Finland. And as co-organisers of Jõgevatreff, we are still here. This great capacity for organisation has continued to be maintained – it is great to see all our 20 members organising everything together.

Notable Members

Kaija Rytkönen

Founding member

I came to Estonia as a student in the autumn of 1992. Due to the lack of foreign spare parts, I initially bought an easily maintained Jawa. Three years later I brought my Honda, and its two-metre-long trailer, from Finland. A motorbike trailer was completely unheard of in Estonia and it created a lot of attention everywhere. I loved that bike, but I wanted something lighter and lower for agility on small roads. When the F650GS came onto the market I made a swift decision to buy it and, now a shade over 20 years later, it is still my bike (changing bike is not as easy as changing men in one's life). Kaija

I've inherited the love for motorcycles from my father but being a girl, I never thought I could ride a bike myself. I only realised this at the age of 38. When I started, I couldn't even imagine what this would bring into my life. Today I'm riding my third bike, I've participated in 10 WIMA rallies and made a lot of friends all over the world. The community is just amazing. I've learned so much and received so much love and support. One of my best 'life schools' has been 10 years of acting as WIMA Estonia national president. Thank you!

Un-official slogan: 'Put something interesting between your legs...like a motorcycle'

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WIMA Finland

In 1993, the idea of creating a nationwide motorcycling club exclusively for women emerged in Finland. The first women-only motorcycle riding course was held in May that year, and the eleven participants decided to establish Ladies' Bike Club.

In 1994, members heard about the international WIMA organisation but lacked detailed information. By 1995, they learned about an upcoming WIMA rally in Sweden. Four women and two children attended the rally to explore the organisation. Inspired by the experience, the club joined WIMA later that year, officially becoming Ladies' Bike Club/WIMA Finland in 1998.

Interestingly, the first WIMA rally in Finland was held in 1973 in Pihtipudas, long before the Finnish division's official formation. Raila Rinne, a WIMA member involved in international rallies, played a key role in organising this first rally.

Notable Members

Throughout the years, many remarkable women have shaped WIMA Finland's growth and success. Some remain active riders, while others have left lasting legacies:

Kristiina Harju

Organiser of Finland's first women-only riding course and one of the eleven founding members. Her initiative was crucial in establishing the club.



Anu Puhakainen

As former president and now honorary member, Anu significantly enhanced the club's visibility during its early years.



Jennifer Rung

Recognised for redesigning the club's logo and creating the cherished 'Wooden Helmet' (Puupää) rotating award.

Suvi Ahtosalo

A long-serving president, active rider, and trainer who participated in numerous WIMA rallies. She helped many women join the club and served on the WIMA World board.

Eivor Kotilainen

A dedicated board member who contributed extensively, including maintaining the membership registry.

Pirjo Kivimäki

A former president and long-time member who significantly influenced the club's development. She is active in international WIMA rallies and served as international historian.

WIMA Finland Today

Over the past 30 years, WIMA Finland has grown to approximately 350 members. Annual activities include the season-opening rally in May, women's riding training, a summer rally in June, and a season-closing rally in September. Members also regularly attend WIMA International rallies, alongside smaller gatherings and rides across Finland. During the off-season, the club participates in exhibitions and events.

WIMA Finland has hosted WIMA International rallies in 2000, 2008, and 2018, with plans for another rally underway. The club continues to foster community among women motorcyclists while promoting safe, enjoyable riding.

With a rich history and vibrant present, WIMA Finland exemplifies the power of community and shared passion for motorcycling.



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WIMA France

WIMA France was started by Agnès Acker in the nineteen sixties and until quite recently the division remained small, despite the success of four beautiful international rallies. The first was organised in the Vosges, at Col des Croix by Agnès. Over many years, without an official WIMA France team, Chantal Hertrich organised several small weekend meetings, as well as the '3 Länder Treffen', with women from France, Germany, Switzerland and even The Netherlands.

WIMA France is now an active division with many riders across the country and the national rallies are a very popular get together. These also attract some international members as they are always held in scenic parts of France.

Notable Members

Colline de Rancourt

President since 2023
I got my licence at 21, in 2009. Working as an archaeologist, I rode on France's roads with my 600 Fazer. In 2022, I began my international road trip on a Royal Enfield Himalayan and rode 20,000 km over six months through Europe and the Middle East. I rode alone but met some WIMA girls en route. In 2023, at the international rally in France, I met many women who encouraged me during my travels and talked with many incredible people. This is why I decided to be the national president.



Anne Girardin

President 2017-2022
WIMA France has gone from strength to strength since Anne



and her team took over: membership has grown substantially, attracting members from all over the country. Anne herself is an avid traveller who isn't deterred by a challenge. She spent a year travelling solo on her trusty BMW F650GS from Alaska to Ushuaia, en route learning both Spanish and how to mend her bike. After a period in the USA, Anne spent many years as a land surveyor for the United Nations, across the world including Afghanistan and several African countries, working to protect the land rights of ordinary people. In 2020 Anne became the first female Mayor in her home town.

Chantal Hertrich

President 1985-2007

I got my licence in 1975. I started riding to maintain my connection with my brother who died in a motorcycle accident. After being pillion with men who rode too fast, I decided to start riding by myself. I've been travelling to WIMA rallies since 1974, and was a member of WIMA Germany, as there was no organised WIMA France, and always informed French and Italian women about WIMA rallies. I was given the title French captain in 1985 in Sweden. But without an official division. We formed WIMA France from my motorcycle club in order to organise the 1990 international rally in France.

At the age of 40, I had my daughter Alexia, and from a baby to the age of 14, she took part in 10 international rallies and many 'Three Countries Rallies'. I strongly encouraged other women to



come to WIMA, with WIMA cards in my bag.

Chantal is still active in the background, available to help whenever needed. She has received the Ellen Pfeiffer award and is featured in that section.

Sophie Vignon

President 2008-2017

Sophie took over the WIMA France presidency in 2008 and greatly continued the national rallies. Geneviève Herbillon took over the French WIMA presidency in 2016 but soon handed it over to the French Vosges' team.

Agnès Acker

Founder WIMA France

Agnès got her licence in 1963 and launched herself into a mass of motorcycle activities, clocking up around 200,000 km over the next 25 years. Having founded WIMA France, she attended every international rally from 1968 for nearly a decade.

Agnès was a terrific adventurer. One year she rode from San Francisco to Montreal on a 350cc Kawasaki in 13 days and she attended six Elephant Rallies on a solo bike (two in heavy snow).

Between 1971 and 1975 she took part in 20 high speed trials at Hockenheim, Schotten and Nürburgring, winning ten medals on her 350cc Suzuki. She had five children and rode while pregnant too, and only got her car licence very late in life.

She is distinguished in other fields as well: an astrophysicist who founded the Strasbourg Planetarium and directed it for 22 years. In 2012 she received one of France's highest awards: Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur.



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WIMA GB

There were British members of WIMA in the early 1950s, and the first WIMA national rally in England is recorded to have taken place in 1956, organised by the then captain, Muriel Scott.

The division took its current form when Anne Gale was captain when, in 1980 at the AGM, the membership voted to accept its own constitution. The decision was made to have a committee to help keep the British division 'on the road to success'. The committee members each have specific responsibilities and are jointly responsible for the management of the division.

WIMA GB membership peaked near 400 in the early 2000s, and then dipped to around 150 members. Membership is now over 380 members again (2025) and we are hoping to continue growing, with a view to ensuring the future success of the division with its pioneering members who are passionate not only about motorcycling but also uniting, uplifting, and empowering other women riders.



The monthly WIMA GB newsletter remains the key method of communication for members. An annual national rally, group rides, ad hoc weekends or days away, and representing WIMA at motorcycle events remain the most enjoyed activities for members.

Captains/presidents from the 60s onwards: Maureen Willis (1965-1973), Sheila Whittingham (1973-1975), Anne Gale (1976-1981), Frances Popley (author/editor of the Pearl Booklet in 1980) (1981-1983), Mandy Hoare (now Pratley, 1983-1987), Vanessa Bretton (1987-1992), Sheonagh

Ravensdale (1992-1998), Caroline Clarke (July 1998-February 2000), Sue Charnock (now Chadwick, 2000-2005), Tyne Henney (now Henney-Scrafton 2005-2010), Val Newman (2010-2020), Caroline Lunnon (2020-2022), Siân Davis since 2022.

There are other WIMA GB members listed in the international presidents, international officers, and Ellen Pfeiffer award sections: Anne Gale, Anna Zee Caroline Lunnon, Janet Cox, Maureen Willis, Sheonagh Ravensdale & Pat Thomson, and Zara Strange.

Notable Members

Siân Davis President since 2022

Siân had not long taken her test when she discovered WIMA through the WRWR event.



She signed up and pretty quickly got involved on the committee, working her way up to eventually become president. 'That sense of pride I felt from the start has grown, as have our member

numbers, our involvement in events and our presence in the Motorcycle community as a whole. I want to help WIMA continue to grow and develop as a support network, for women wanting to ride, to travel and to participate in motor sports.'

Val Newman President 2010-2020



Val joined WIMA in 2002 as a novice rider because she wanted supportive company to ride with. 'I love all the friends I've made, both in the UK and outside

it. The international rallies ensured I visited places I may not have gone to. For the future, I hope that WIMA continues to grow, and represents female motorcyclists from all walks of life, all over the world.'

Ann Weir Former Regional Contact for Wales, and Rally Officer 1987-1993



Ann has been a WIMA member since 1979. She loves WIMA

for the camaraderie of all female bikers and attended her first international rally in Fort William in 1982, along with her chocolate labrador, Deno, in the sidecar. 'I took over as rally officer doing everything on my own; booking rally sites, marquees, disco, BBQ, organising quizzes, raffle prizes, tea, coffee etc. Even bringing a rally bike pulled by my sidecar for rallyists to take part in a gymkhana. I have attended at least 15 international rallies travelling on my own.'

Tiffany Coates

Regional Contact for Cornwall

Tiffany is the world's foremost female motorbike adventurer, having explored six continents by motorcycle, riding hundreds of thousands of miles in more than 20 years of adventurous journeys. She joined WIMA in 2013 to be part of an organisation that supports and promotes riding for women. 'I love the sisterhood and the enthusiasm, the acceptance of everyone for all women riders. Let's get more younger women involved, and make WIMA relevant for the next 75 years.'



WIMA GB contact details

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WIMA Germany

WIMA Germany was founded by Ellen Pfeiffer in 1958 at the first European meeting in the Netherlands. Women coming from Germany, the Netherlands, England and Switzerland took part in the rally. Over the years, WIMA Germany has hosted a total of 14 rallies in Germany and a further four have been organised in other countries by German members. See the international WIMA rallies section for their full description.

In the early days, rallies mostly took place at racetracks like the Nürburgring or Hockenheimring. Female racing riders like Margit Blum (then VP of the BMW Club Germany), Brigitte Döhler (as a former test rider in East Germany, she was only able to take part in Eastern European rallies) and Helga Heinrich-Steudel (also a racing rider in East Germany at that time) shaped the image of WIMA Germany. Margit and Brigitte are still active WIMA Germany members. The WIMA idea quickly caught on and many enthusiastic female motorcyclists, who easily covered 10,000 or more kilometres a year, found their way to WIMA, e.g. Monika Greiderer, Beate Eberstein, Ole Fuhrmann, Elke Löhnertz, to name but a few. Today, WIMA Germany has about 350 active members.

In 2018, we had our WIMA Germany 60th anniversary celebration at the Tonenburg in Höxter, a legendary biker meeting place. WIMA Germany feels like a big family to us. We ride motorbikes together, we celebrate together, and every single woman is a part of this family. To dive into a foreign culture every year and to travel to countries you otherwise would not have gone to, that

is what WIMA means. Being part of the international family, that is WIMA for us.

Although we had to cancel the German WIMA rally in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were quite a few German members who still made their way to Wilnsdorf/Siegerland. It turned out to be a very nice 'alternative WIMA week'. The WIMA community sticks together even in hard times. We look optimistically to the WIMA future. Our younger German members are going to keep the wonderful WIMA history alive.

Notable Members

Ellen Pfeiffer

Founder and first president. WIMA's award for exceptional achievement is named after her and Ellen is featured in the Ellen Pfeiffer award chapter of this book.

Floh Petit

Floh became our second WIMA Germany national president after being treasurer of the European WIMA for several years. Floh led WIMA Germany for 18 years until 2002 in an untiring one-woman-show. She managed all the organisational tasks alone, later on supported by her daughter Sascia, who rode to her first WIMA rally as a pillion. She continued to work as WIMA International treasurer until 2007.



Verena Reindl

Verena took over as national president in 2002 and, with the help of a team of WIMA women from Munich, she led the division for 17 years. Verena led the division with great enthusiasm and commitment and represented WIMA Germany



in countless meetings and rallies during this time and was always, and at any time, approachable for every WIMA woman.

Susi Metzner

Susi has been national president of WIMA Germany since 2019. 'I got my motorcycle licence in 1990 and have had a variety of motorcycles over the years and have lived and ridden in various countries. I joined WIMA in 2003 and have participated in most international rallies since then. In 2007, I was part of the organisation team for the international rally in Plothen and in 2014 I was elected to the board of WIMA Germany, mainly responsible for the registrations for the rallies.'



WIMA Germany contact details

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Instagram: @wima_germany **YouTube:** Team WIMA Germany



WIMA Ghana

Ghana joined the WIMA sisterhood in January 2021. Ghana is the country with the second largest number of female bikers in West Africa and with WIMA's presence in Ghana, this is bound to encourage neighbouring countries to learn more about WIMA and hopefully, join the sisterhood.



Notable Member

Cathie Lajide

President since 2021

Cathie is known in the biking community as Firefly. She has been riding motorcycles since 2015 and she has an impressive track record. She is the first Ghanaian and Female Biker to receive Nigeria's Tough Tourers Award and celebrated as the longest distance rider to both ROAD ROAR and CALABAR FESTIVAL. Cathie is also the founder of the first all-female motorcycle club in Ghana, Blueflame MC, and together with the female bikers in Accra and support of the biking community in Ghana, launched the Ghana Chapter of Female Bikers Initiative, (FBI) a charitable initiative created for the awareness, creation and screening of women for breast and cervical cancer - first event took place in August 2019 where about 100 women were screened.



WIMA Ghana contact details

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WIMA Iceland

WIMA Iceland was established on 15 December 2022.

The reason we have not been seen before is that we have been adjusting ourselves to the association and learning how everything works. Now we are ready to show you and introduce Icelandic women to this great community.

We (Dagrún and Begga) first went to the Swiss rally in 2022, then Dagrún and Hafdís went to the rally in France in 2023. In Romania we were four of us, Dagrún, Hafdís, Begga and Sigga. Icelandic rallies are usually held in boarding schools or youth summer camps. It is a very good idea to connect the rally to a motorcycle trip, like starting at the rally and then riding on some adventures or the other way around. Women can also go from the rally site to day trips around the area.

WIMA is a great place to get to know excellent women from all over the world. Now we are taking our first steps to show ourselves, we do have a logo and soon we will open for membership applications. But for now, let's see if we can interest women in Iceland in being part of the WIMA family. We are asking women to share our Facebook site with their motorcycle girlfriends and tell them about us.

To make a logo for WIMA Iceland Dagrún made up this character and a little live story to have fun with the project. All the examples are designed by Rakel Karlsdóttir, an Icelandic designer and motorcyclist, living in Denmark.



Our logo character is Freyja.

1. Freyja is young, free and a little wild. She is tough and beautiful, so all the boys have their eyes on her. But she is only thinking of riding her bike and having fun. She rides fast and loves to feel the wind in her long hair.

2. Freyja has earned respect from her fellow bikers. The boys all tried to charm her, but she loves only one. They started their usual life, have lovely kids and a beautiful home. She always loves to travel on her bike and starts to realise it is necessary to use a helmet. Because of the cold and safety, now that she is a mom, safety became priority. She just enjoys the bike and all the nature she can explore, while riding.

3. Freyja is in her prime, tough, and secure in her own skin. A little broken after the love of her life died but she has lots of very good biker friends. But she still also loves to ride on her own, enjoys travelling, forgets all her worries and the kids at home. She has nothing to prove, she can be herself, and she feels good about herself.

4. Now Freyja is totally free, the kids have all grown up and she doesn't care what others think. She now travels to many countries and has got to know bikers from all over the world. She even finds herself in the arms of a woman occasionally. She and the bike are one with nature. She is as tough as ever and still up to facing whatever.



WIMA Iceland contact details

Email: wimaiceland@gmail.com

Facebook: WIMA Iceland



@Nirmali Nath



WIMA India

Namaste from the land of colours and diversity! As WIMA India, it is our endeavour to provide a non-discriminatory and impartial platform to women motorcyclists in the country, irrespective of their caste, creed or the bikes they ride. Our aim is to build a community of women riders who respect and support each other. We will always encourage women from different groups and associations to join WIMA India and be a part of the global community. Our motto, which also stands true for our magnificent country is 'Unity in Diversity.'

True to our motto, we engage in a wide range of activities through our love for riding. We've done rides to promote tourism and local arts and crafts. We've also visited colleges to create an awareness of 'travel to impact', an



@Nirmali Nath

initiative to help more girls feel more confident to travel. Before the pandemic, we held a very successful national rally where our members could spend time together and make new contacts, but we have not been able to host another rally yet.

Notable Member

Anita Krishnan

President

I'm a travel enthusiast and an avid motorcyclist. I work as a motorcycle tour leader with 'Two Wheeled Expeditions' and do tours in India and Nepal. I'm also a certified group fitness instructor.



@Nirmali Nath



WIMA India contact details

Email: wimaindiachapter@gmail.com

Facebook: WIMA India Instagram: @wimaIndia



WIMA Italy

Founded by Rosaria Fiorentino, WIMA Italy joined the sisterhood in the autumn 2020. Although still in its early stages, we have 44 members to date and numbers are steadily growing. Rosaria is experienced in organising motorcycle events - since 2015 she has been the host of Distinguished Gentleman's Ride for Rome, and in 2016 she formed the national women's group Donne Special - a casual group without any obligations, just the pleasure to be together. Donne Special is about the special woman that decided to jump on a bike to change her life, to live in a different world on her own terms. In addition, Rosaria hosts a women's event called Babes Great Escape and she was the co-organiser of the Italian section of the Women Riders World Relay.

Notable Members

Rosaria Fiorentino

Founder and President

I have always travelled, and I love to know different realities and traditions. In WIMA, I can satisfy my curiosities in the world of motorcycling, connect and meet like-minded women. As national president of WIMA Italia, my goal is to create a community of open-minded women bikers, to teach how beautiful sharing is inside and outside our peninsula, to grow this passion with love and loyalty. WIMA

will expand on what we are already doing with Donne Special; motorcycles rallies, small races, participation in fairs and exhibitions in the motorcycling sector, helping those less fortunate than us and of course travelling.

The team

WIMA Italy has put together a highly-skilled team of board members with experience from all walks of life: Monica Dorigatti, also known as Cromilla, as

vice president ▪ Francesca Montevocchi, secretary and social media manager
 ▪ Federica Marano, secretary and social media manager ▪ Francesca Sibona aka Dixie Ramone, international public relations ▪ Rossella Di Nuzzo, editor and social media manager,
 ▪ Silvia Mana, photographer ▪ Luigina Fattirosi, treasurer ▪ Monica Bertolusso, activities officer ▪ Michela Bertocchi, activities officer and membership officer
 ▪ Elena Giovagnoli, road captain ▪ Anna Polame, activity officer and road captain.

Our motto is 'Never surrender to difficulties'. This is something that women, especially if they are motorcyclists, know well.



WIMA Italy contact details

Email: soraia@fiorentino.com **Facebook pages:** WIMA ITALY ▪ Donne Special ▪ Babes Great Escape

Instagram: @wima_italy @donne.special @babesgreatescape



Michiko Hitomi
President 2005-2011



Notable Members

Keiko Osawa

President 2012-2022

I started riding in 2005 and joined WIMA in 2007 soon after I found WIMA on the internet. I still remember how thrilled I was to know that such an organisation existed because I love riding and travelling and I had no female friend who was riding motorcycles. My

darling motorcycle at home is a BMW F800S and in Europe I ride a Yamaha XSR700 which is kept in UK. In Japan, people learn how to ride motorcycles before you get your licence, but it is important to continue learning after you start riding on the road. Female motorcyclists are still a minority, but together we can learn many aspects of motorcycling and share experiences at the international level in WIMA to enjoy motorcycling for many years to come. My job as an interpreter gives me the opportunity to travel all over the world and I make a point of meeting up with WIMA members where ever I can.



WIMA Japan

WIMA Japan was launched in April 1996 when 24 members (plus three partners) of WIMA from various European countries visited Japan to introduce WIMA here. Now, WIMA Japan is one of several women's bike clubs in Japan - but we are the only international organisation. Currently we have about 40 members and we get together for different types of events such as national meetings in spring and autumn, and we are engaging in the beach clean-up campaign by riders in gratitude for nature. Many members now regularly participate in WIMA International rallies. In 2010, WIMA Japan successfully hosted an international rally for the first time at the foot of Mt. Fuji. WIMA Japan would love to hear from anybody who is interested in us or travelling to Japan.

International rallies in Japan: 2010 Fujinomiya, Shizuoka; 1996 Izu, Shizuoka.

In 2022, Mariko Shibata became president of WIMA Japan.

Yuko Sugeta

President 1996-2004

Yuko was an accomplished motorcyclist, test rider, editor of the popular mainstream monthly Lady's Bike magazine and Japanese correspondent for numerous international motorcycle magazines. Yuko now runs her own acupuncture clinic in Tokyo and frequently visits India to volunteer at a free clinic for disadvantaged people in Mumbai. Her passion is to pass on Japanese acupuncture methods to local female acupuncturists.



WIMA Japan contact details

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WIMA Korea

WIMA Korea was established in 2011 and has 160 members (15 international activities) as of 2025. Among them are track competitors, GS Trophy competitors, and off-roaders.

National slogan:

좋은 사람들과 함께하는 라이딩은 행복입니다!
Riding with good people is happiness!

Korea is one of the motorcycle powerhouses in the world, and there are many people who enjoy motorcycles as a hobby.

In the past decade, the number of female riders has increased a lot, and now you can see many introductions and reviews of their motorcycle life through social networking services such as Instagram and YouTube.

Notable Members

Judy Kim, President and founder
Ride: Harley Low Rider ST, Ducati Monster 821 and Triumph Bonneville.

Soo Jin Yoon, Treasurer
Ride: Honda CBR500R.



WIMA Korea contact details

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WIMA Liechtenstein

The idea of WIMA Liechtenstein was born during the Women Riders World Relay in 2019. After a successful relay, the founding team, Sonja Grass, Sabine Warwas and Claudia Fehrer started planning for the set-up of this division, which was voted in to WIMA World in the autumn of 2020. The membership numbers are currently 10 and steadily growing as the plans for the future unfold and more events can be planned.

The founding of a WIMA division is of great importance for Liechtenstein. There are so many women riders around in our small country, and the goals of WIMA Liechtenstein

are to create a stronger community and give opportunities for female riders with similar interests to meet. Being a part of WIMA is a way of making new friends from abroad, especially from our neighbouring countries Austria and Switzerland, organising trips through the Alps and paying visits to international friends - all in all a fantastic vision of international ideas.

Notable Members

Sonja Grass

President

I was born in Austria but have been living in Liechtenstein for 25 years now. I've been riding for more than 34 years and love my bike, a Harley Davidson EVO Fist 1340. Riding my motorcycle is my passion: feeling the wind on my face, enjoying nature, visiting different places, meeting new people and cosily sitting with friends to socialise. Motorcycling also means freedom.

Sabine Warwas

Treasurer

She has been riding since 2005 and has made friends all over the world thanks to WIMA. As she has seen the value of WIMA and international friendship, she is happy to take this opportunity to give back to the community by offering her skills to WIMA Liechtenstein.



Claudia Fehrer

Speaker

She was the organiser of the Liechtenstein leg of the Women Riders World Relay and her great experience, extensive knowledge and skills in WIMA are an asset to WIMA Liechtenstein. Claudia has served WIMA at an international level for many years and is featured in the international presidents section as well as the Ellen Pfeiffer award section.



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Facebook: WIMA Liechtenstein



WIMA Lithuania

WIMA Lithuania was founded in October 2018 following a personal meeting with then WIMA International President Åsa Öhqvist and founder Evelina Žičkienė in Trakai. Evelina led the division initially and handed over to Jolita Arlauskaitė in early 2020. Then in 2021 Loreta Liliene took over as president.

We really wanted to become a part of this worldwide women riders' community so that we could feel stronger and strengthen women's support internationally. We saw the

huge opportunity for sharing the information about safety in the field of riding motorcycles - about the proper preparation for new motorcyclists, about safe travelling, etc. Although we haven't initiated any international projects yet, we're feeling quite confident and secure that we are in a bigger community than just ourselves. In addition, we are happy that we have wider opportunities to travel and meet with our soul sisters in a lot of countries!

Our activities and get-togethers are mainly casual. Mostly we communicate,



support each other and generate ideas online. We meet and ride together when it suits us. We just love the idea that we are free, all equal, that we don't have any particular duties for this organisation and can just enjoy life and our friendship and implement some projects that we want. For example, we supported Moterų Pagalbos Linija (Women Help Hotline) in Lithuania.

WIMA Lithuania contact details

Email: wimalietuva@gmail.com **Facebook:** WIMA Lithuania – Women's International Motorcycle Association
Instagram: @wimalithuania



WIMA Luxembourg

WIMA Luxembourg was founded in 2019 by Ann Kathrine Kayser Hansen, the Luxembourg ambassador for WRWR (Women Riders World Relay). The division was granted WIMA status based on the amazing work done by Ann Kathrine during WRWR.

Ann Kathrine says 'The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg sits between Belgium, Germany and France and is brimming with beautiful twisty roads in mint condition. It attracts riders from all over Europe and although we are a Lilliput nation, you will not be disappointed by the beauty of our country and the hospitality of the WIMA ladies here. We work closely with our WIMA sisters in Belgium and have so much we want to share with you whether you want to join WIMA Luxembourg or if you are just passing through, so don't hesitate to get in touch.'

Shortly after WIMA Luxembourg started, Covid struck and all activities came to a halt. But the photos will give you an idea of the energy and enthusiasm of the Luxembourg women.



Notable Member

Ann Kathrine Kayser Hansen

President

Originally from Denmark, Ann Kathrine has lived and worked in Luxembourg for over 30 years. She works for a multi-cultural international organisation and speaks numerous languages fluently. She was fascinated by motorcycles from a young age but she was 47 by the time she got her licence and got on the road on her own bike – a journey only briefly interrupted by breast cancer.

She says 'Getting involved in the organisation of the WRWR Luxembourg leg, fuelled my passion even further and gave me the opportunity to raise



awareness of female riders within the Grand-Duchy and across the globe via social media. I have met many extraordinary women riders (even if percentage wise, in Luxembourg we are still below 15%). These women are currently scattered across various smaller local, often Facebook-based groups, and I do hope that WIMA Luxembourg will become a great asset and pull together and further promote the female motorcycle community within the country. Covid-19 put the brakes on our growth but the future looks bright.'

Ann Kathrine is a passionate rider and strong believer in international sisterhood where we all support each other and she has great plans for WIMA Luxembourg for the future.



WIMA Luxembourg contact details

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Instagram: @wimaluxembourg



WIMA Malaysia, inviting more ladies to join. She organises many trips either locally or abroad to the neighbouring countries: Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia.

Solo Arrya

President since 2020



I have been riding since the 1990s and the motorbike is my primary mode of transportation. My first bike was a Kawasaki EN 500. I commuted 100 km from home to work daily with my bike until my retirement in 2020 from the government social security service. Currently, I am enjoying riding a retro cafe racer-styled Kawasaki W800. It's ideal for tooling around town enjoying the vintage charm. I have covered most of the Malay Peninsular but have yet to reach Borneo. The farthest I've been with this bike was Phuket Island, Thailand, 1000 km away.



Vice President Lin Yeoh

WIMA Malaysia

WIMA Malaysia was founded by Nor Zaida York on 11/11/2011 after being advised and inspired by Sheonagh Ravensdale from WIMA GB. WIMA Malaysia consists of a small group of 45 lady riders with a range of motorcycles of various brands and types from 125cc to 1400cc. Malaysia's clean, straight highways and curved roads, as well as off-roads throughout the country, enable us to experience and enjoy the kind of riding we prefer. We tend to chase the sunset in the west and sunrise in the east of the peninsular. Speed is not our priority - our primary aim is to enjoy every kilometre of the ride and reach the destination safely.

Some WIMA members are also a member of other active lady biker groups. WIMA Malaysia has no limitations for anyone wishing to join any other group as long as we ladies remain united and supportive of each other. We have the similar motive of riding motorcycles and a mutual feeling of having fun and excitement. It enables us to meet and interact with different people, connects us to our surroundings, gives us freedom, and improves our overall well-being.

In 2018, we held the Asian Women Force Rally as part of International Women's Day with 78 women

participating from Indonesia, Brunei, Borneo and Malaysia. It was supported by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. Its main purpose was to promote the rise of the women empowerment movement.

We would like to welcome anybody from WIMA, from anywhere in the world, to contact us and to come and visit us in Malaysia. Let's go riding together into the wind!

Notable Members

Nor Zaida York

President 2011-2019 (below right)



Nor has been riding since the 1980s. She is well-connected to the international motorcycle traveller community and regularly hosts international travellers. She successfully organised the Malaysian leg of the WRWR. Nor tirelessly promotes

WIMA Malaysia contact details

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WIMA Mexico

WIMA Mexico was founded in 2020 by Angélica Garduño and is the first division in Central America. This is what she says about WIMA and why she wanted to join.

'WIMA, for us, is old and strong, like a wise grandma. It's a representation of a global movement that speaks of unity and value among women.

We definitely benefit as women bikers from being a part of WIMA, because it contributes to projecting the loud message that women are independent and free to choose whatever lifestyle we want and that we are not weak or wrong, and most important of all... we are many and not alone.'

Angélica and the founding members of WIMA Mexico are all part of the club Ninfas Guerreras, which was founded in 2004. Back then, there were only mens Moto Clubs in Mexico and therefore we're very proud of having founded our own club - it was a big deal, since at that time there was a lot of sexism in Mexican motorcycling.



Our MC was the second MC nationwide for women only, based in Guadalajara but with representation in several states in Mexico. After a decade, more and more women's motorcycle clubs began to spring up across the country. Nowadays, it is great to see that there are many women, not only riding motorcycles for recreation, but at levels of competition in speed motorcycling, enduro and 4x4.

Ninfas Guerreras is an MC with history, where at the beginning we faced segregation for having created it, prejudice and social criticism and where we were mugged and insulted for doing what we wanted to do - ie ride motorcycles. We are proud to have been among the first in Mexico to start a women's MC, and we recognise the courage and strength of the women who started before us, as in the USA in 1950, I can only imagine to a certain extent what they had to overcome, the criticism, the prejudice, the insults, but I know that what I imagine is insufficient for the courage of the women who have paved the way for all of us today to have international rallies and a WIMA WORLD association.

The main activities organised by WIMA Mexico are touring and ride outs. We travel to other cities on weekends and ride while enjoying our motorcycles, our freedom and our friends. We also participate in events; in Mexico there are many very beautiful cities, and the tours are never boring.

We welcome all women that want to belong, share their experience and create a strong network of friends who share the same hobby all over the world.

We believe a woman is an amazing being and women together reach for the impossible. Our motto is: Mujer motociclista, mujer sin fronteras which means woman motorcyclist, woman without borders.



WIMA Mexico contact details

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Facebook: WIMA México Instagram: @wimamexico



Miss Moto Moroc WIMA Morocco

Miss Moto Moroc was founded in 2011 by Dalila Mosbah and is the first women-only motorcycle club in Morocco. In 2019, we became part of the WIMA World sisterhood as Miss Moto Moroc WIMA Morocco. We are happy and honoured to be part of the great international association that is WIMA.

Notable Member

Dalila Moshbah

President

It is important for us Moroccans to be a member of WIMA World and to see our flag appear among 38 countries, it gives an important image to Moroccan women. Riding a motorcycle and crossing

regions in often challenging conditions is something that very few women here can do. I have always encouraged Moroccan women to take up this challenge. WIMA Morocco is quite an international group; we have nationals from Japan, France and Tunisia. I, myself, am Tunisian Moroccan. I was Franco-Tunisian, but I had to give up my French nationality to obtain Moroccan.

We have a lot of motorcycle activities and have friendly links with other clubs. They ask us to organise events and ride outs, and we do something about once

a month in the company of male clubs who like to ride with us. We also have members who are married, and their husbands accompany us on rides.

I have been organising an important rally called March Moto Madness International Worldwide Adventure Rally since 2011. Unfortunately, the ninth rally in March 2020 could not be held because of the pandemic but it has restarted since then.

Our slogan is 'ghamir aw ghadir', which means 'join the adventure or leave' in Arabic.



Miss Moto Moroc WIMA Morocco contact details

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WIMA Nepal

WIMA Nepal was started in 2020 by Women in Motoring, a group of women enthusiasts working for women empowerment through motoring-related activities in Nepal. It had a composition of the following executive members: Ms. Sanju Bajracharya (coordinator), Ms. Sunita Deshar, Er. Shreejana K.C., Ms. Pratiba Gairhe, Ms. Pragya Adhikari, Ms. Puja Bhusal, Ms. Namrata Prasai, Ms. Soni Tandukar. This team submitted the proposal to WIMA International requesting affiliation for the Nepal division. The team was guided by Mr. Govinda Prasad Bhattarai (as a patron) during the whole procedure.

We had been actively helping women to get opportunities in sports and boosting women to achieve their goals. In continuation of that, we started 'Women in Sports and Adventure-Nepal' - a nationwide voluntary campaign in women empowerment. We got knowledge about WIMA and as we share a common objective towards women empowerment, we were eager to initiate WIMA Nepal.

The team Women in Motoring was later transformed into WIMA Nepal after getting affiliation. The WIMA Nepal team now has the following composition of executive members: Sunita Deshar

(coordinator), Pratiba Gairhe (joint coordinator), Usmita Thapa (secretary), Sony Tandukar (treasurer), Durga Gongba Tamang, Nirjala Bhandari, Sulakshana Khadka.

We now work specifically to enhance and promote women in motorcycling through WIMA and as a separate organisation it is easier for us to grow nationwide and connect internationally. The pandemic halted the growth of WIMA Nepal but despite Covid-19 we managed to host a successful TikTok competition and held an award ceremony.



Some other events that we have held:

- Ride to countryside camps
- Heritage Ride
- Ride Marshall Training
- Royal Enfield ride on international women's day

Upcoming events:

- Safety Training
- Mechanic training

WIMA Nepal contact details

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also on a day-to-day basis. I believe when you feel comfortable, you like to join and organise activities, you think 'we' and not 'me', you give and get help when needed. And above all, you have a great time, with nice and cool ladies, sharing your passion for motorcycling. In 2021 it was our 40th anniversary, though we were unable to celebrate it because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Géke Sieben

Géke has been a member of WIMA NL for 41 years, longer than anyone else. She joined right at the start in June 1981 and she is still an active member. In 2011 she became our member of honour. She has helped in the organisation of all the Dutch rallies since WIMA NL officially started



and has attended many international rallies as well. Géke said in 2023 'I started biking when I was 22; now I'm 72 and after 50 years I will stop biking this year! Not because of age, but my partner wants to have a few more years with me without worrying about my safety when I'm on the road! But Switzerland will not be my last Rally! My first bike was a Suzuki 250 two-stroke, then three BMWs and lots of Hondas, Yamahas and one Kawasaki Ninja! In the photo I am beside a Ducati Indiana.'

Mieke Westbroek

Mieke is another Dutch member, who earned her credits. She is featured in the Ellen Pfeiffer award section.

WIMA Netherlands

WIMA Netherlands officially started in 1981 and has 75 members. Throughout the year all sorts of local activities are hosted by members at home. We call them TB, 'thuisbijeekomsten', in English: 'home meetings'. In April, we have our Open Weekend, which is also for women who are not members (yet). In May and September, WIMA NL meets for a WIMA-weekend. These are camping weekends that take place in the Netherlands or in a neighbouring country, like Germany, Belgium or Luxembourg. Our annual Autumn Walk is another opportunity to chat and laugh and we also have a Winter Weekend in January, so we can meet throughout the year.

There is a large group of very active and enthusiastic members who participate in several activities and help organise them. We have an annual official meeting (AGM) in March. The digital newsletter is published six times a year. We have a website and a Facebook page and we are taking our first steps on Instagram. Many of our members attend the international rallies and, depending on the location, about 25 members go. And they always have a good time. We have organised several international rallies: 2010 Markelo (European meeting), 2004 Borculo, 1997 Heythuysen, 1989 Eiland van Maurik, 1983 Spaarnwoude, 1966 Aalst, 1963, 1960, 1958 all in Scheveningen. The international rally 2021 in Grolloo was sadly cancelled at the last minute due to the coronavirus pandemic, although

some WIMA members were able to travel to Grolloo for an alternative rally and spend a nice week together.

Notable Members

Sandra Ilbrink

President 2017-2025



I got my licence in 1996 and made a lot of day and weekend solo trips. And then, in 2005, I discovered WIMA. I became a member and after a month attended my first international rally in Sweden. What a blast! I currently ride a BMW F800ST.

Many tours, rallies, and friendships later, in 2017, I was asked to take over from Dutch NP Bernadette Hanekamp. She did the job for 10 years, with success, and is still a very active member.

For me as a leader of WIMA, it is important that our members can feel at home, can make friends, and be themselves. We look after each other, on the road, at the campsite and many of us

WIMA Netherlands contact details

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Facebook: WIMA Nederland Instagram: @wimanederland



WIMA New Zealand

WIMA NZ began in 1952, initially as a satellite division of the Australian branch, with Audrey Henderson (who remains a life member, and is profiled in the former international officers section) co-ordinating the NZ side. In 1984 WIMA NZ was re-started by a group of girls from Wellington. Our first national rally was held in 1986 and WIMA grew to having branches all over the country. Over the years Wellington has usually been the largest branch. WIMA members keep their membership number for life and therefore we have over 800 members, with members coming and going. Unfortunately we have currently shrunk to just the 6 life members, however interest is starting to grow again.

Wellington and Auckland Pink Ribbon Rides support New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation, for which we've raised well over \$100,000. Riders would dress in pink and pink-up their bikes too. Over the years WIMA NZ has also supported a variety of other charities.

Hawkes Bay WIMA ran a Wicked Wine Trail for many years. We would ride to Hawkes Bay on a Friday, jump on a bus Saturday morning to cruise around a handful of wineries to end the day with a BBQ. Always a great fun day!

WIMA NZ ran an AGM/rally for many years, with branches taking turns to run the event all over the North Island. But in the end, the rally ended up being held at Camp Rangī Woods in the Pohangina Valley near Palmerston North.

WIMA also arranged 'Have a Go Day,' women-only track day courses, motorcycle maintenance evenings and 'Days in the Dirt'. Areas would arrange weekends away, coffee rides and International Female Ride Day rides.

WIMA arranged the New Zealand WRWR Banner, as well as helping out and riding in the NZ event.

WIMA Wellington's slogan is 'It's all about the curves.'

Notable Members

Viv Green (#10)

President



I was introduced to WIMA NZ at the very first AGM in 1984. I had only been riding for a year and became a member at the meeting - I haven't looked back. I have made so many friends through WIMA, been pushed outside my comfort zone several times, taking on different roles such as treasurer for Wellington WIMA then NZ, and running the Pink Ribbon Rides. After 38 years, WIMA is still part of my motorcycling adventure - I'm both Wellington area rep and lately took on the NZ president role. Now WIMA NZ is in a bit of hibernation as I get things up and running again, but things are looking up with more women joining us.

Lynnda Barry (#79)

Lynnda is a long-standing committee member of WIMA NZ. She has taken the time to teach a lot of women to ride, be it



on a small road bike around a car park or a trail bike in local hills. Lynnda was the first to put her hand up to help arrange the yearly WIMA rally/AGM. She has the best stories about adventures

away on the bike and great photos to go with it, normally on roads less travelled.

Yvonne Forrest (#235)



Yvonne has held several positions on the committee over the years, most notable being WIMA NZ president and in 2005 she hosted the WIMA International rally in Taupo. She has also taken time to be WIMA's voice on ACC - Motorcycle council (road safety board). She was also area rep for Hawkes Bay running some great Wicked Wine Trails. Yvonne has done track racing and has covered the length and breadth of NZ on Rusty Nuts M/c events.

WIMA New Zealand contact details

Email: wima.nz.president@gmail.com



WIMA Nicaragua

WIMA Nicaragua joined in 2020 and is our 39th division and the second division in Central America after Mexico. **Yolanda Acuña**, the founder and president first heard about WIMA from a good friend, the Finnish WIMA member Sonja Hellsten, and through her the connection to WIMA sisterhood was made. Yolanda is a feminist and works for an organisation called Project Miriam whose objectives are to contribute to the integral development of women's right to education and a life free of violence. WIMA Nicaragua aims to motivate and encourage women to ride motorcycles and break the traditional belief that women should not ride.

WIMA Nicaragua held their first tour on the third of January 2021, a ride out to a nature reserve known as El Tisey, which was a very beautiful and motivating experience. WIMA Nicaragua already has 10 members, and their goal is to continue to grow.



WIMA Nicaragua contact details

Email: yoliesteli@yahoo.com

Facebook: WIMA Nicaragua



WIMA Norway

WIMA Norway was founded in 2019 by Eli Johanne Stene and Emilija Kostovska, who were the ambassadors for the Norwegian route of the Women Riders World Relay the same year. The international relay gathered almost 3000 Norwegian female motorcyclists to the Facebook event and was a massive opportunity to get organised. Eli is still the president of the Norwegian division, while Emilija has chosen to step down. Anette Sundsbak has replaced her, but as vice president.

In only its first year, WIMA Norway managed to consolidate a board with board members from all across the long spread-out country, build the organisation and host several events. Rapidly increasing numbers of paying members made us capable of hosting even more events, and expand the variety of courses, training, lectures and social gatherings. Within the first year, the members grew to over 300. Leaping into year three, Norway already had divisions situated in ten cities, with corresponding crews and online-chats for planned and spontaneous trips.

In co-operation with dealerships, driver licence schools, other biker organisations, second-hand shops, artists and local authorities, we expanded the menu of offers for female bikers.

For 2019, we were awarded 'The Initiative Prize' by the Community of Motorcycle Enthusiasts, consisting of members from importers, dealerships, press, motorsport, tourism and driver training establishments.



For 2020, we were nominated by the local Lodge for the annual prize for youth-related work.

In 2021, the biggest number of female amateur bikers in Norway - ever - took part in a two-day racetrack course. The combination of safety, schooling, speed and sisterhood is working well for us northerners.

Notable Members

Eli Johanne Stene

President (below, Eli left & Anette right)
Eli has a garage filled with bikes, and the diversity is huge. A Triumph Bonneville, a Russian Ural with sidecar and a Yamaha MT07 – the 'Wimaha' among them. Which means Eli is capable of riding practically anywhere. And does so. At



her summerhouse in Spain, Eli has a Suzuki Bandit to relieve her from any restlessness that might appear after car or flight arrival.

Anette Sundsbak

Vice President

Anette has, for the last 11 years, had a monogamous relationship with her Yamaha R1 which is best suited to asphalt roads and tracks, but has been known to wander slightly about as well. Maybe it suffers from a little sense of direction as its owner. Rumour has it that she is flirting with some offroad ideas, though.

WIMA Norway contact details

Website: www.wimanorway.no

Instagram: @wimanorway





WIMA Pakistan

WIMA Pakistan was founded in 2020 by Guliafshan Tariq as a way of uniting and empowering Pakistani women through motorcycling. WIMA provides a platform to connect with women riders from different countries and backgrounds and although we have very limited resources in Pakistan, joining WIMA will eventually open our doors to the international world. We will be able to learn everyday skills, such as how to ride safely, how to pack smartly, and get opportunities to listen to the stories of brave women who travel across the globe.

Through WIMA Pakistan, girls from Pakistan will get a platform to share their own stories and be able to get guidance for their international plans – a motivation and inspiration to break stereotypes and be able to join international rallies and events.

In Pakistan, female motorcyclists still face challenges; it is not safe to travel as a woman alone in Pakistan due to the conservative and traditional thinking of men. In Pakistan, where women can face a lot of criticism from their family and friends for going to university or even buying groceries, it is very challenging when they decided to learn to ride bikes. It is unusual for women to ride bikes

on the streets but now the situation is changing; we've started doing rides on weekends and rallies and touring trips to the north and south of Pakistan. Here the most common bikes are typically smaller bikes such as the 70cc Honda, the 125cc Yamaha and the 125cc Suzuki.

WIMA Pakistan hosts all sorts of motorbike-related activities:

- weekend rides within cities
- long tours across Pakistan
- safety courses
- motivational speeches
- TV shows participations



WIMA Pakistan contact details

Email: guliafshantariq1@gmail.com

Facebook: WIMA Pakistan

WIMA Poland

Our organisation in Poland was established in 2008, with the aim of creating a supportive community for women riders. Since its founding, we've been dedicated to empowering women through the love of motorcycles, providing a platform for connection, and organising events that foster camaraderie and growth within the motorcycling world.

We're part of a global network of women who share a passion for riding – WIMA Poland was officially approved by WIMA national presidents on the 29th of April 2010, during the WIMA International rally in Japan. Whether it's through local meetups, rides, or our outreach programmes, we work to bring together

women from all walks of life, encouraging them to break barriers and share their love for the open road.

Our organisation is built on the values of freedom, adventure, and inclusivity. We believe that riding across our own country and the whole world is the best thing that we can do to meet new friends and share our passion without racism, discrimination and purpose to harm anyone. We are promoting a positive female biker culture in Poland, in Europe and, of course, worldwide.

We are an officially registered association in Poland and all activities done by the club are legally and ethically approved.

WIMA Poland contact details

Email: maura_r@yahoo.com

Website: www.wimapoland.pl

Facebook: WIMA Poland



National President Maura Raniecka, on her first WIMA experience visiting Japan



From our historic photos collection



WIMA Romania

Founded in 2017, WIMA Romania now boasts over 120 active members. Our mission is to create an inspirational environment for women who share a passion for motorcycling, fostering a strong community of long-distance, commuting, day-to-day, and weekend riders.

Our Mission

Being part of WIMA Romania is about learning to give back and grow. We actively promote motorcycling as a lifestyle and ride together on various occasions, offering enriching and inspiring experiences. Our goal is to organise as many trips and events as possible to enhance the spirit among female riders.

Community Activities

We are one of the most active communities in the Romanian motorcycle ecosystem. Our activities include:

- Annual rallies: Two annual rallies to gather WIMA members from across the country
- Regular events: Defensive riding, enduro, and mechanic courses
- Partnerships: Collaborations with moto equipment stores and moto services offering discounts to members



- Media presence: Featuring women with inspiring stories of travel and unique experiences
- Charity work: Blood donation campaigns and bi-annual equipment donation drives
- Advocacy: Supporting legislative changes related to motorcycling.

Why we joined WIMA

We started as a small group of lady riders who enjoyed being together. Our desire to connect with an international community that inspires and supports us led us to join WIMA International. It makes us feel stronger and more connected. 'A solo woman rider has courage, but riding with a group builds confidence.'

Special Achievements

- Largest women-only motorcycle association: Legally registered association/club in Romania
- Pioneer in exhibitions: First motorcycle association with a dedicated booth at the largest motorcycle fair in Romania (SMAEB)
- National parades: Organised the first national women-only motorcycle parade

- Pink parade: Yearly charity parade for breast cancer prevention
- Supporter of WRWR: Exclusive supporter of WRWR Romania
- Safety Campaigns: Partnered with other motorcycle clubs for the 'Safety on 2 Wheels' nation wide campaign
- Started Women Motorcyclist's Day in Romania as a celebration and recognition of women riders
- Romanian Traditional Blouse Day celebrated on the motorbike
- International rally 2024: 257 participants from 20 countries.

National Logo and Motto

Logo: We believe that our logo reflects femininity, openness, progress, passion, and safety in women's motorcycling.

Motto and Campaigns: We promote a family atmosphere with several campaigns and slogans: *#wearefamily*, *#sinoisuntemintrafic* (we are also present in traffic)

Founding Members

Mihaela Hodivoianu, Ina Popa

WIMA Romania contact details

Email: wimaromania@gmail.com **Website:** wimaromania.com **Facebook:** WIMA Romania

Instagram: @wimaromania **YouTube:** WIMA Romania



WIMA Sweden

WIMA Sweden was founded by Britt Inger Petterson from Finspång in the 60s. She was very active and her links to England and Germany were strong. The members were spread over the south of Sweden with a cluster in Gothenburg. Back then motorcycling women were not a common sight in Sweden and it can be read in various newspaper articles that they rode all kinds of machines: from 125cc up to the at the time huge 750cc. WIMA Sweden has several members who have stayed loyal over the years, Margareta Behr joined in 1970 and is still a member! Our main activities in Sweden have always been the autumn and the spring meetings. These are organised by members and are typically held in a vandrarhem (hostel) in the countryside and are an opportunity to enjoy local culture, ride, chat, cook and eat together in a casual way.

We have hosted several international rallies: 1975 in Omberg, 1985 in Gålö, 1995 in Morokulien, 2005 in Gyllebo, 2015 in Sundet.

Notable Members:

Ingela Nyman

President 1994-1998.

She was the national president who set up the constitution and created a more formal structure with board members for WIMA Sweden.

Berry Keller

President 1975-1994, 2002-2007

She has been a member since 1973 and regularly travelled to the international rallies together with her husband and



internationally and she would always find an opportunity to sing 'Flee fly flo' with everyone in the party tent. This song is listed in the songs section.

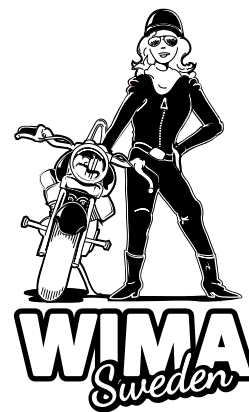
Inger Sjölander Eson

President 1998-2002

She has been a member since 1981 and is still active in WIMA Sweden. She was the president that increased the membership the most by for example taking part in motorcycle fairs in Sweden.



She was initially riding a Honda Silverwing and later a Honda Pan European.



Carola Palmqvist

President since 2007

I've been a member since 1995 and I've taken part in most of the international rallies. Although I've ridden a lot of different bikes, I might be best known for riding Harleys. My current bike is a Harley Davidson FatBoy. In the early years I rode a modified Sportster 1000cc from 1974, still have it at home and



now with a new look. Attending rallies is always a great pleasure and I've had the honour to meet many WIMA legends, and I hope to meet many more. My motto is 'Love to ride, ride to live!'



WIMA Sweden contact details

E-mail: president@wimasweden.se Website: wimasweden.se

Instagram: @wimasweden Facebook: WIMA Sweden Svenska Wimors egen grupp



Eva has been riding motorcycles for more than 20 years and joined WIMA Switzerland in 2006. At the association's meeting in 2009, she was elected vice-president. Her WIMA career peaked at the 2016 AGM when she was elected president. She currently rides a Honda Africa Twin.



1992 - Venice Carnival. From Gritli's point of view: A coffee in the Schiggimiggi Café Florian costs Fr. 11.40. Four nights in Venice and we were broke.

1994 - Gold digger weekend in the Napf area. Everyone found what they were looking for and the tiny gold splinters were best taken care of in a glass jar with a magnifying glass. Only one person got rich and that was the landlord.

1995 - Comment from Françoise: Where can you get the best raclette with all the trimmings, including homemade mushrooms? Where can you still see and hear authentic pictures and stories from the motorcycle pioneering days? At Juliette's in Yverdon, of course!

We have organised several international rallies: 2013 Val de Travers, 2006 Hoch Ybrig, 1998 Les Tuileries-de-Grandson, 1991 Steinen, 1984 Morbio-Superiore, 1980 Bumbach, 1976 Yverdon. These are all documented in the rally section of this book.

'Wytti' Monika Wyttenbach.

Vice President since 2016

Wytti has been a member of WIMA since 2002 and has been riding motorcycles for over 30 years. She currently rides a BMW F 700 GS. She has done a lot of travelling – including Russia via Sweden/Finland and back via Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany, as well as New Zealand which she says was the most beautiful.

Betty Manz

Assessor

Betty has been riding motorcycles since 1971 and she has been a member of WIMA Switzerland since 1985. In 2020 she was elected to succeed Barbara on the board as an assessor. She rides a Moto Guzzi.

Conny Tanner

Secretary

Conny has been a member since 2004 and has been riding for over 20 years. Her favourite motorbike is a Honda CB 650F.

Irène Goldberg

Cashier

Irène has been a member since 2010, and she is now a passionate Triumph rider! Until last year she was riding a heavy Harley Davidson.

Margrith Sutter

Margrith Sutter received the Ellen Pfeiffer award in 2017 and is featured in that section.

WIMA Switzerland

WIMA Switzerland was founded in 1978 by Juliette Steiner and the earliest members of the WIMA Swiss division were Regula Rüttimann (Biernath), Margrit Geissmann (Podesser), 'Nandle' Nandy Schüpbach, Pierrette Iseli (Froidevaux) and Esther Spahr. Our division currently has 50 members. WIMA Switzerland gathers women with one thing in common: the passion to ride motorcycles. We have an annual programme with various activities during the year, but the highlight is always the international rally where we travel to meet WIMA friends from all over the world.

Some memorable moments in WIMA Switzerland's past:

1979 - Scout Trophy - Motto: Castles, palaces and ruins - Time frame: 1st March to October 30th. The winner was whoever had visited and photographed the most objects.

1989 - The snow fun weekend was once again a success. At least in terms of registrations and mood. Despite the fairly high humidity (i.e. rain), some stalwarts tried the slopes anyway. Most of them, however, paid homage to the dog sled race that took place nearby.

Notable Members

Eva Streuli

President since 2016



WIMA Switzerland contact details

Email: hello@wima-switzerland.ch Website: www.wima-switzerland.ch

Facebook: WIMA Switzerland Instagram: @wima_switzerland

WIMA United Arab Emirates

WIMA United Arab Emirates was founded in 2019. It is very important to us to be part of the most prestigious and historic association to empower women riders globally.

The Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) was a turning point, where we joined global lady bikers to do the relay. This was the first time we did something on that scale and it felt very empowering. We had ladies travelling from Canada, Australia, UK, Bahrain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia etc to join us in Dubai. We hosted our WRWR final destination party beneath the amazing Burj Khalifa and the media coverage of this event was amazing. All of this hard work and dedication is adding to our legacy in the Middle East to empower more ladies to explore motorcycling.

Notable Members

Lara Tarabay was the first ever Arabic WIMA president and she said 'to bring the concept to the Middle East is very rewarding, because it anchors my vision of enabling ladies in our region to feel empowered by being connected to other lady bikers through an international association.'



Lara has now left the UAE to pursue life elsewhere and the division closed down for a while, but she told us this 'The girls ride different bike brands and different models and we want to experiment with off-road bikes as a group. Dubai is a very cosmopolitan city in the UAE. Our group currently has the following nationalities: Lebanese, Saudi, Bahraini, Russian, Moroccan-French, Jordanian, Lebanese, UAE national and Palestinian. I would say female riders are still emerging in the UAE; there are a good number of riders but still a modest number. We have in our group a lady from Saudi who had to come to Dubai to get her rider's licence, as it was still not allowed in Saudi. Eventually, due to Covid-19, she went back to Saudi and she has just finished one of the local Saudi tours.'

Katrina Corcoran

President since 2022 (photo above)
I am honored to be the national president for WIMA UAE as we promote the recognition of and support for female riders in UAE. The number of women riders locally continues to increase and there is a tremendous amount of opportunity here to unite women riders and encourage females of all ages in motorcycling. WIMA UAE will be in contact with multiple women's groups ranging from motocross and enduro groups, track

and sport bike groups to Harley Owners Groups and the International Female Ride Group UAE (IFR UAE).

WIMA UAE plans to work with all major motorcycle brands in the UAE, as well as motorcycle organisations such as FIM to better understand how we can work together to promote and support female riders. There are many groups and clubs here and often we aren't aware of what the other groups are doing. I foresee WIMA UAE creating that umbrella of awareness and support needed among female motorcycle riders and enthusiasts here so that we can increase our support across the community.

Many women here have noted not seeing a strong female presence at events, whether attending mixed gender events, female biking initiatives, entering a competition or cheering them on as they compete. To know we are supported and understood is of the utmost importance. We must stay the course with our sisters by showing up in the good times, showing up during the difficult times, and showing up even when we are the only ones there. We are not alone. We are strong. We are one.

Internationally, WIMA UAE is excited to welcome international women riders and to partner with other WIMA divisions to organise riding events here in the UAE as well as abroad.

WIMA UAE contact details

Email: wima.uae@gmail.com

Instagram: WIMA UAE



(photo above: Alena)

WIMA Ukraine

My name is Alena Puhovaya and I'm the founder of WIMA Ukraine. I've been riding motorcycles since 2006 and during these years I have been trusted with some important tasks, including being the director of a Ukrainian Association of Motorcyclists, UAM, and the Ukrainian ambassador during the Women Riders World Relay in Ukraine. I'm also a member of the Ukrainian organisation Motohelp, a medical support organisation for motorcyclists on the road.

In Ukraine about 5-7% of the bikers are moto ladies and we ride with great pleasure, to get to work, to meet with friends, for leisure, travelling. We ride all types of motorcycles: adventure touring bikes, choppers, cruisers, dirt bikes, naked bikes, sport bikes etc.

However, in our country women do not have their own communities. Mostly, moto ladies are independent bikers. There are some groups in Ukraine: Lady of Harley, Cherries Community and some small moto clubs with less than 5 members. Very often, moto ladies are members of men's motorcycle clubs. This is why I set up WIMA Ukraine. I wanted to provide a platform for all Ukrainian moto ladies and create something more powerful than just a moto club.

WIMA Ukraine is just in its early days. It was established in 2020, during the pandemic, and therefore we have not yet been able to hold many events but we have great plans for the future.

Our logo means my road is without a beginning and without an end, which leads to WIMA.

WIMA Ukraine was established in 2020, during the pandemic. Subsequently, in February 2022, Ukraine was invaded by Russia and normal life changed overnight. Alena and family and friends decided to offer shelter and assistance to dozens of women and children. WIMA World, WRWR and others sprang into action and over 20,000 euros was donated to help Alena look after them. In addition, Alena and friends have also visited a number of affected villages taking food and essential supplies and distributing to people in need.

WIMA Ukraine contact details

Email: wima.ukraine@gmail.com **Facebook:** WIMA Ukraine Division
Instagram: @wima.ukraine



Sylvia Salenius

President 2015-2020

Sylvia represented WIMA USA at international motorcycle shows in California, Illinois and Texas and made appearances at several rallies run by regional and national women's motorcycle organizations. She says 'My role was to keep knowledge of WIMA alive in the US and to spread the joy of our international sisterhood with stories about our rallies and information about motorcycle travel abroad'.

Alice Sexton

President 2002-2011.



For more than 25 years, Alice raced vintage Moto Guzzis and Ducatis, for organizations such as the Mid-Atlantic Road Racing Association (MARRC), the American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association (AHRMA), and the Willow Springs Motorcycle Club (WSMC). She worked effectively for many years to bring visibility to women motorcyclists and to revitalize WIMA USA.

WIMA USA

WIMA USA was originally founded in the United States by Louise Scherbyn in 1950. The USA division was the foundation from which all other divisions grew under Louise's passionate leadership. WIMA USA faded in the 1970s but was revived in 2002. At that time, the strong leadership of Alice Sexton helped WIMA USA grow to over 100 members. The organization stayed vibrant for nearly a decade. But after Alice retired as national president, and with the proliferation of local, regional, and national women's motorcycle clubs across all 50 US States, WIMA USA found it challenging to maintain an active national membership across such a large country.

In 2020 a new leadership team was formed by a group of women from different backgrounds and parts of the USA and with different riding styles. Michelle Lamphere (president), along with Kimberly Brown (vice president), Rachel Stienstra (treasurer), Lynda Hood (director of membership) and Shana Sanderson (director of social media and technology) grew the membership to nearly 200 members in the first year. A variety of projects and events are in development to help support and engage our members across the USA. In 2021 two virtual rallies were held. In 2022, we held our first national rally. We organise regional rides hosted by regional chapters; we are also developing a charity partnership and launching a quarterly newsletter for members. Membership currently stands at around 500 members.

Notable Members

Louise Scherbyn, founder of WIMA International and Theresa Wallach, first WIMA vice president are fully profiled elsewhere in this book.

Michelle Lamphere

President since 2020



Michelle was born in Sturgis, South Dakota, home of the world-famous rally, and learned to ride at the age of 15. She developed a love of adventure motorcycle travel and spent two years living on the road in North, Central and South America. She self-published two books about her journey and has written numerous magazine articles about her subsequent travels. Michelle was one of the WRWR eight-person administrative team and designed the global route for that event. She is co-founder of Rev Sisters, which produces online motorcycle film festivals. She is a panel member of Adventure Rider Radio's RAW monthly podcast.



Danell Lynn earned a Guinness World Record for the longest trip by motorcycle in a single country. She traveled in all 50 states, and logged 48,600 miles from September 2014 to August 2015.

Honorary memberships and recipients of the WIMA USA award:

Theresa Wallach - AMA Hall of Fame Inductee 2003 (award accepted by WIMA USA VP Erica Smith)

Vicky Jackson-Bell - Factory motocross racer, first woman to win a WSMC and National 125GP championship

Debbie Evans Levitt - Winner of seven Taurus World Stunt Awards, AMA Hall of Fame Inductee 2003

Jan Plessner - Former PR director Kawasaki and advocate for women in motorcycling

WIMA USA hosted international rallies in 2009 in Keystone, Colorado, and in 1970 in New York (20th anniversary celebration). It is also hosting the 2025 international rally.



Erica Smith

Vice President 2002-2011



Erica was listmanager for the first-ever Women in Sport Touring (WIST) listserv (an electronic mailing list) for women riders in the US. An avid Ducati rider and sport-touring enthusiast, Erica filled a need in the spirit of WIMA to connect women riders. For over 15 years, WIST was one of the only online sources for sport/touring women riders to virtually meet, share experiences, and organize. She was instrumental in reviving WIMA USA by creating policy and inclusiveness priorities, and creating the first WIMA USA website, blog, and events.

Sarah Schilke

Advocate 2002-2011



Co-owner of WomenRidersNow.com, former VP at SW-Motech USA and marketing director at BMW Motorrad USA, first woman elected to the Motorcycle Industry Council. As a long-time industry professional, Sarah has shone a light on all women in motorcycling. With

her life-long career in the international motorcycling community, she was a champion for WIMA USA/WIMA World and was instrumental in the recreation of WIMA USA.

Mary McGee was an American motorsport racing pioneer. She was the first woman to compete in motorcycle road racing and motocross events in the United States. She competed from 1960 to 1976, then began competition again in 2000 in vintage motocross events. In 2013, McGee was named an FIM Legend for her pioneering motorcycle racing career. She was inducted into the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame in 2018.

Wendy Crockett member of the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) LongRider program, the Iron Butt Association, and the Motorcycle Endurance Rider Association. Wendy was the recipient of the AMA Board of Directors 2020 AMA Bessie Stringfield Award and was the 2019 winner of the Iron Butt Rally, the first female winner of that event.



WIMA USA contact details

Email: info@wima-usa.com **Website:** www.wima-usa.com

Facebook: WIMA USA

Former WIMA National Divisions

WIMA Greece

Greece joined the WIMA family in December 2018. The founder, Andrea Psoma, being passionate about motorcycles had made it her livelihood. The number of female riders in Greece had increased significantly over the preceding few years and several female motorcycle clubs have been formed. This division closed in 2023.



WIMA South Africa

WIMA in South Africa was started in 1971 with Lil Collett being the first member and founder of the division. Lil managed to recruit nine members by 1973 and the figure remained unchanged until 1976. In 1976 Claudie Hiles took over as captain and WIMA went from strength to strength. In 1978 Gill Boting took over the job of captain for the division. By 1979 they had close on 100 members spread throughout the country. The photo below is members at the 1975 Buffalo Rally.



WIMA Hungary

The Hungarian division of WIMA was officially formed at the international rally in 2011.

'Whether on track at the Hungaroring, racing, long and short tours, we have developed a great camaraderie between us. At that time we were members of a small female motorcycle club.' wrote National President Emese Melicher.



The aims of the club and its members were to promote the culture of safe motorcycle riding, to recruit members across the country with a shared interest in motorcycling, to promote women in motorsport, to organise events, support both new and young riders, as well as those that have been biking for years and support the activities of WIMA internationally. The division was closed down due to most of the members having less time due to babies and small children.

WIMA Panama

WIMA Panama was accepted into the international sisterhood of WIMA in 2021. President María Elisa Dejuane Mateo and 45 women from different groups joined forces to give themselves a voice and a place that they deserve in society. This division closed in 2023.



WIMA Thailand

WIMA Thailand's founder and first national president, Penlada Krutkosa, started the division in 2013 with members from all over Thailand. Today there are a lot of women who ride motorcycles in Thailand both for essential transport and for leisure, with their numbers increasing all the time. Members ride a variety of bikes (sport, off-roading, touring & cruiser) and they hold at least one official group activity per year at which they ride and travel together. This division closed in 2021.

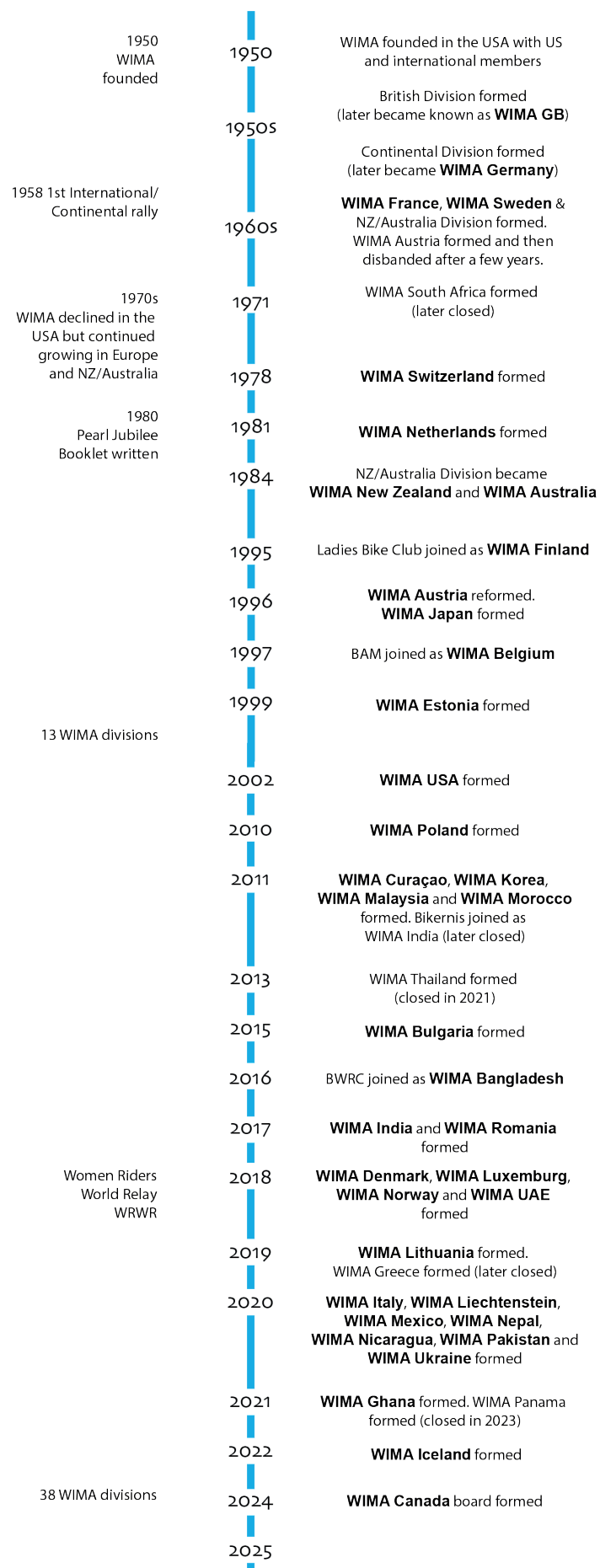


Current Divisions

WIMA AUSTRALIA
 WIMA AUSTRIA
 WIMA BANGLADESH
 WIMA BELGIUM
 WIMA BULGARIA
 WIMA CANADA
 WIMA CURAÇAO
 WIMA DENMARK
 WIMA ESTONIA
 WIMA FINLAND
 WIMA FRANCE
 WIMA GB (GREAT BRITAIN)
 WIMA GERMANY
 WIMA GHANA
 WIMA ICELAND
 WIMA INDIA
 WIMA ITALY
 WIMA JAPAN
 WIMA KOREA
 WIMA LIECHTENSTEIN
 WIMA LITHUANIA
 WIMA LUXEMBOURG
 WIMA MALAYSIA
 WIMA MEXICO
 WIMA MOROCCO
 WIMA NEPAL
 WIMA NETHERLANDS
 WIMA NEW ZEALAND
 WIMA NICARAGUA
 WIMA NORWAY
 WIMA PAKISTAN
 WIMA POLAND
 WIMA ROMANIA
 WIMA SWEDEN
 WIMA SWITZERLAND
 WIMA UAE (UNITED ARAB EMIRATES)
 WIMA UKRAINE
 WIMA USA (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

Former Divisions

WIMA GREECE
 WIMA HUNGARY
 WIMA PANAMA
 WIMA SOUTH AFRICA
 WIMA THAILAND



The WIMA International Rallies



73 WIMA International rallies have been held to date, starting in 1958 with the inaugural rally at Scheveningen in the Netherlands. A version of the report of this first rally from Das Motorrad was printed in the original WIMA history booklet in 1980, but we've gone back to the original, which only came to light recently and we are including the whole article. Reports of subsequent early rallies were often

as long and as detailed as this first one but have had to be cut for space reasons. However, we've listed the source (where known) in the appendix.

Thanks to painstaking research by several current WIMA members, we have managed to find information about all of the rallies. Full reports were sent by early participants such as Anke-Eve Goldmann and Ellen Pfeiffer to leading motorcycle magazines such as Das Motorrad in Germany, Moto Revue in France by Agnès Acker, Moto Sport Schweiz in Switzerland

by Regula Rüttimann and The Motorcycle in England by WIMA members or visiting journalists. Male journalists even attended rallies in early days and their reports sometimes reflect the prejudice WIMA members endured. These first reports included



all the names of the participants, names of who had won which event and even the points each 'girl' (as they were styled) had achieved.

The early European division was called the Continental division, so naturally, the early rallies were termed Continental rallies. The name changed to WIMA International rally sometime in the 1980s. Over the years, they have been held all over Europe, from Sweden and Finland in the north, down to Spain in the south, from Wales in the west to Hungary and Czechoslovakia behind the Iron Curtain before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and again in Hungary and the Czech Republic since then.

In 1996, the first rally outside Europe was held in Japan. Rallies in Australia, New Zealand, USA and Curaçao followed, in the same years as the ones in Europe. Originally, when two rallies were held in one year, one of them was designated the official international rally – this was usually in Europe where more presidents were likely to attend, and the presidents' annual meeting would be held. 2009 in USA was the exception to this rule, but it was not until 2018 when it was agreed that both rallies should have equal importance, and in 2019, WIMA hosted two international rallies, organised by WIMA GB and WIMA Curaçao.

Rallies have been held every year since 1958, except for 1962 when so many members were pregnant or breastfeeding that nobody was available to organise one and, more recently in 2020 in Germany and 2021 in the Netherlands, due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We have included information about these two however, as so much work went into the preparation, and they deserve a mention.

In the very early days, there were few participants, but they were extremely competitive. Women had been banned from road racing since 1925. Following Beryl Swain's ground-breaking ride in the 1962 TT race, her international licence was immediately revoked by the FIM (Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme), and no women were allowed to participate again until 1978. Louise Scherbyn wrote many pleading and protesting letters to FIM over the years, most of which were ignored. Small wonder then that the first WIMA rallies placed such emphasis on intense competition. Read the reports of these early rallies to get a sense of the passion our early members had for the sport.

Agnès Acker, WIMA France founder, wrote this in the first history booklet, back in 1980:

'To help pass the time pleasantly, motorcycle events are organised, covering four different areas:

1. Trial. This is an event divided up into sections with observers and special tests. Particularly spectacular in the last three years: the Savoy (in the French Alps), in Wales and at Pisek in Czechoslovakia. Among the best was the French girl Maryvonne Rosso. Among the least enthusiastic, Agnès Acker! The Gymkhana, equally a test of dexterity and balance, brings together all the classics of the 'genre', slaloms between cones, on grass, under bars, in a brook, over tyres and a seesaw, etc.

2. Tests of Orientation and Time Trials of a hundred kilometres or so with official and secret controls. Particularly scenic in 1977 when it linked Meribel to the Col de l'Iseran, part of the



Above: Helga Steindel, 1963

Below: Brigitte Walther, 1963



route being between walls of snow some five metres high. Having a greater experience of this kind of terrain, the French girls are happy in these events, where they usually shine. Some variations on this type of trial are: The Mini Rally where each girl makes up her own route through places whose name begins with the letter of a chosen word (eg the letters of the word WIMA), and where she must collect the stamp of a garage or office in each place to show her passage there. The winner is the one with the shortest route. The Chinese Rally is a kind of game where, with the help of a simplified diagram of all road junctions on the route, one must find one's way over a couple of dozen miles across woods, through villages, farmyards etc.



3. Speed Tests. During the 1960s these used to take place on the Nürburgring, Hockenheim and Zandvoort circuits, and in 1970 a hill climb was organised at the Col des Croix. However, with the increasing number of women taking part, these road events have become too difficult to organise and have been replaced by hill climbs on dirt roads in Finland and England, or simply by acceleration tests over approximately 200 metres amidst the roar of engines and general excitement.

4. Tests of Applied and Theoretical Mechanical Knowledge

where one needs to know the workings of the two-stroke and four-stroke engine, and the various technical characteristics of the different makes. Competitors came to a grinding halt when confronted by the Kreidler Korn-Westheim machine badge and the photographs of the Simplex, Ural and Vostok motorcycles. Another test is that of 'Mystery Bags' where one has to identify, by touch alone, the contents of twenty little sealed bags. They contain such items as split links, brake pads, cam followers, screws, piston rings etc. Particularly entertaining are the practical tests: in France the girls had to repair (amid much hilarity) the bikes which had been tampered with by their male friends. In Finland they had to remove and refit a tyre, take apart and rebuild a carburettor and check the brake shoes on a Panonia. This was all done against the clock.

The mechanical tests are much appreciated by the French girls who simply love theoretical questions where they always come amongst the top, in particular Agnès Walesa in Wales in 1978. One must say that, professionally speaking, the French represent the intellectual element of WIMA since many of them hold the noble profession of teacher, which, as everyone knows, means a lot of holidays!

It is noticeable that most of these events ignore tarmac roads and the headiness of 45-degree bends. A good empty road is too difficult to find, a real circuit is too expensive to hire and the draconian safety rules make even the most fervent organiser withdraw. So, they try to make up on sand, gravel, mud, in thunderstorms and lashing rain, all these conditions being classified under 'virile' and which do not deter the WIMA girls, however far they have to go.

After all the events and tests, the best in all categories is crowned 'Madam WIMA' for the year. As the German girls have the greatest number in WIMA this title has gone to a German in 1975, 78 and 79. In 1976 and 77 the English won it (Rule

Above: 1963 speed test

Below: Ellen Pfeiffer tackles a hill climb

Next page: Metamorphosis from 'oily Amazons' to 'lovely creatures'



Britannia) and in 1974 it was won by the French girl Maryvonne Rosso. However, the French girls regularly come between second and fifth place.

A Fantastic atmosphere... audible, but also a psychological well-being, whatever evil tongues may say: no criticisms, no jealousies, no quarrels. Everyone knows that each of us practises her favourite sport to the maximum; time, money and temperament being taken into account. The lucky ones ride up and down the old and new continents clocking up over a hundred thousand kilometres. They take part in competitions (five of the members enter and do well in time trials). In Germany Ellen (Pfeiffer) attempted the Liège-Cannes-Liège endurance test in 1978, just like the mainstays of WIMA in the fifties and sixties. Juliette Steiner won a Gold Medal in the Cannes-Geneva-Cannes endurance trial. Lida Abrahamova, test rider for JAWA/CZ, won a gold medal in the International Six Days Trial. Helga Steuel, of East Germany, is a champion on her 125cc machine. Others use their bikes to go to work, take the kids to school, do the shopping, go across fields and woods. They would all defend to the last their motorcycles and the way of life they represent.'



This great description by Agnès Acker tells of the days leading up to 1980 when the first history was produced. In the first ten years, about a dozen women attended the rallies. By 1980, the numbers had gone up to 100; the Czech rally in 1996 attracted 350 when only 250 had been expected – somehow the Czechs managed! Numbers declined slightly after this and they have settled generally to between 200-300. It must be remembered that the rally organisers are for the most part just local members and not professionals, and it's generally a new team organising each rally, even if it's in a country where it's previously been held.

As time went by, the style of the rallies changed radically. Very basic campsites with minimal facilities (1985 – a pump, a lake and a wooden hut with drop toilets were the sanitary offerings in Sweden) gave way to campgrounds offering abundant hot showers, dormitories and even private rooms. One rally in Poland in 2014 was held entirely in a hotel with no camping though this has been the only one. All rallies now take care to accommodate disabled participants.

Food has always been important with a sumptuous welcome and farewell dinner. Local dignitaries have traditionally been invited to welcome rally-goers – sometimes this involves a long speech in a language nobody outside the host country understands, but on the odd occasion, a female motorcycle riding celebrity has been greeted with great excitement.

Entertainment was introduced early on; displays by local dancers or artists, performances by local musicians, discos and live, often female, bands are now very common. A bar on site has been de rigueur for well over two decades. And a campsite fire has been very popular since the early days (see the WIMA songs section). In the very early days, for the final night, the women swapped their leathers and boots for long dresses, heels and make-up.

An entertaining description by Anke-Eve Goldmann in 1960 relates:

'Saturday saw probably the most incredible metamorphosis of this multi-coloured and so far, best and most beautiful WIMA

meeting. Although, as all week long, the motorcycles were still in dense heaps around the guesthouse in the Badhuiskade, oily Amazons have disappeared. Instead, one could see lovely creatures in fragrant clothes coming in and going out. Some of those who saw this claim to have recognized Gisela Battis in the lady in the cleverly simple summer dress and the Parisian mannequin hairstyle; another – the resemblance to Martha Frei in that well-built figure with the soft eyes and the high, extremely chic heels and still others even claimed that the striking lady with the artist's mane and the clever, mischievous face was Jenny Steenbeeke, whose average in Zandvoort in 1958 was 105 kph, and the graceful figure next to her in the dark cocktail dress and with the slender hands was none other than Jopy Deijs, who rides a huge, snarling motorcycle and presides over a motorcycle club. But all this is hard to believe and perhaps only to be blamed on the Genever, which is brewed so excellently in Holland..'

Some participants still dress up on the final night to this day – but generally, anything goes!

Activities have also changed. The focus on competition has diminished over the years and is now more on fun and games, but most rallies have some sort of timed ride-out, usually called 'the treasure hunt', where members, with the help of coordinates or a map, have to find their way through the local area and take part in different activities or answer questions at a range of locations. Each rally comes up with diverse ideas to challenge and entertain participants. Skills are still called for, whether slow riding by motorbike, obstacle courses by bicycles – even the silly games have a competitive edge.

Excursions to local places of interest were introduced as early as 1968 in Czechoslovakia when the rallyists took in a visit to Hluboká Castle and České Budějovice. Such visits have been a staple of every rally since. These activities contribute to making the rallies a great opportunity to get to know the area, as well as being an opportunity to make new friends. By tradition, many different awards are handed out at a rally, not just based on skills, but also with humorous categories.

Cultural evenings, now known as Trash Nights, have become a much-loved (by many, though not all!) part of the entertainment. First introduced in 2001, in Spain, different divisions at the rally present some sort of show – a song or a short comedy sketch – with dressing up optional.

An upsurge in the international women’s movement in the 1970s had a knock-on effect on WIMA. Husbands and male partners had always been welcome at rallies and indeed were often co-opted to help. However, as Irmgard (Floh) Petit recalled in 1980, ‘a number of women discovered motorcycling as an emancipation factor, appeared at WIMA and brutally tried to squeeze in new women’s political consciousness. Many comrades-in-arms from the beginning left at that time.’

However, tolerance prevailed over the years and men (attached to WIMA members) became welcome again, though unaccompanied men are still not admitted and there is no membership status available to men. Until relatively recently however, considerable caution was exercised in advance, about revealing the exact location of any rally, before it was underway, to avoid potential problems.

In the 1990s as numbers grew, it became more difficult to predict numbers as there was no real pre-booking system. Most women pre-booked (juggling currencies before the Euro made things easier), but certainly in mainland Europe, some just turned up on the day without booking; some even escaped paying at all, but just ate the food and spent time avoiding the organisers! It was also impossible to judge whether these were WIMA members or not! Organisers had to estimate numbers, based on the location, from year to year and hope for the best.

A pre-booking system was eventually set up via the national presidents, with deadlines for deposits and final payments

in advance to be sent from each country to the organising division. This made planning of increasingly complex events for large numbers considerably easier.

The number of international divisions waxed and waned; active rally-organising countries like Finland and France disappeared for years and then suddenly reappeared. Others, like the Czechs, have disappeared completely. These rallies have, right from the start, been the glue that binds the WIMA divisions together, bringing women from many different countries together for several days of celebrating what we have in common: fun, friendship and community.

A final word on the rally reports – our sources range widely from a few memories from current members to comprehensive articles in several languages in various European magazines. With no funding and time marching on, we have used Google Translate to get at the information. We took a deliberate decision to try and preserve the sometimes quirky writing in the originals, so we have not ‘cleaned’ the translations beyond checking for obvious errors and ensuring the reports make sense in English.

Many of the photos used are identifiable only by the year and location of the rally. Often we are unable to identify individuals or specific events within a rally. Maybe future editions of the history will be able to help. All the source material will be preserved in the WIMA archives.

Grateful acknowledgement is due here to our team of Rally sub-editors: Elke Koepping in Berlin (WIMA Germany) and Caroline Lunnon, Jo Marlin and Tiffany Coates (WIMA GB) for taking on a decade each and producing the edited versions.



1958 – The Netherlands	1996 – Japan
1959 – West Germany	1996 – Czech Republic
1960 – The Netherlands	1997 – The Netherlands.
1961 – West Germany	1998 – Switzerland
1962 – No rally	1999 – Austria
1963 – The Netherlands	2000 – Australia
1964 – West Germany	2000 – Finland
1965 – West Germany	2001 – Spain
1966 – The Netherlands	2002 – Czech Republic
1967 – Czechoslovakia	2003 – England
1968 – West Germany	2004 – The Netherlands
1969 – Austria	2005 – Sweden
1970 – France	2005 – New Zealand
1970 – USA	2006 – Switzerland
1971 – West Germany	2007 – Germany
1972 – Czechoslovakia	2008 – Finland
1973 – Finland	2009 – Italy
1974 – France	2009 – USA
1975 – Sweden	2010 – Japan
1976 – Switzerland	2010 – The Netherlands
1977 – France	2011 – England
1978 – Wales	2012 – Austria
1979 – Czechoslovakia	2013 – Switzerland
1980 – Switzerland	2014 – Poland
1981 – West Germany	2015 – Sweden
1982 – Scotland	2015 – Australia
1983 – The Netherlands	2016 – Hungary
1984 – Switzerland	2017 – Estonia
1985 – Sweden	2018 – Finland
1986 – West Germany	2019 – England
1987 – England	2019 – Curaçao
1988 – Hungary	2020 – Germany - cancelled
1989 – The Netherlands	2021 – The Netherlands - cancelled
1990 – France	2022 – Switzerland
1991 – Switzerland	2023 – France
1992 – Germany	2024 – Romania
1993 – Austria	2024 – Australia
1994 – Wales	2025 – Germany
1995 – Sweden	2025 – USA

1958 The Netherlands, Scheveningen, 13-20 July

A full report of the very first WIMA International (or Continental as it was known for many years) rally was published in *Das Motorrad*. It was written by Hans Kimmel who later became the husband of one of the participants, Anke-Eve Goldmann and is reproduced (in translation, plus a few explanations) in full here. The Pearl Booklet also carries substantially the same description of this rally.

Amongst the participants listed below, Ellen Wetzig became Ellen Pfeiffer, European WIMA leader for decades. Anke-Eve became a well-known motorcycle journalist and racer, Juliette Steiner was a much-loved Swiss member, a renowned racer and long distance rallyist, who received the Ellen Pfeiffer award in 2006. Of the rest nothing more is known.

The Best Fun of the Year - WIMA Meeting

The Dutch are an impressive people. They have great roads, a seductive cuisine and an amazing number of motorcycles. Above all, they keep their cool. I have seen few police officers and no smashed cars in Holland; on the other hand, on the last 20 km of the Federal Republic of Germany before the Dutch border, three cars were in the ditch. And almost every second motorcycle on German roads is ridden by Dutch people – or so it seems. The Dutch also had the nerve to host a motorcycle meeting for women – what a thought!

Somewhere in the USA, there is a woman who rides a primeval giant Indian and saves money to buy trophies that are won in the competitions of the women's club she founded (WIMA, Women's International Motorcycle Association). Her name is Louise Scherbryn. Five of her trophies stood in the pension in Scheveningen, where the girls who had come to the first European WIMA meeting were staying together. About 15 had registered, from Holland, France, Switzerland, Germany, England, Austria and RČS (*Editor's note: Republic of Czechoslovakia until 1960*). Unfortunately, the Czech girl did not get an exit permit and the brave girl from the GDR (*Editor's note: East Germany*) of course did not either. The nine, who came, were:

- Mrs. Jopy Deijs-van Dinter, Rijswijk, (the Netherlands), on Velocette Venom 500
- Mrs. Jenny Steenbeeke-van Dinter, The Hague, (the Netherlands), Jawa 350
- Mrs. Willy Parson-Liebers, Amsterdam, (the Netherlands), Puch 150
- Mrs. Han Clavan-Selder, Scheveningen, (the Netherlands), Jawa 250
- Ms. Ellen Wetzig, Frankfurt, (West Germany), am Main, Horex Resident 350
- Ms. Anke-Eve Goldmann, Wiesbaden, (West Germany), BMW R 69 600
- Ms. Marleen Lutz, Mannheim, (West Germany), BMW R 51/2 500, sidecar
- Mrs. Juliette Steiner, Yverdon (Switzerland), BMW R 50 500
- Ms. Barbara Batt, Sellindge (England), AJS 16 MS 350



About the characteristics of these individuals: Jopy is the initiator of the meeting. She's striving to set up a European section of WIMA with regular competitions. Jenny is her younger sister. Her father, Piet van Dinter, must have been a racing ace around 1930, apparently in speedway races. The whole van Dinter family, including sons-in-law, is totally motorcycle mad. Han is a woman of at least 40, with two children of about 12–15 years. She was also the hostess: all participants stayed in her private boarding house. Her house in Scheveningen was the headquarters for the event. Juliette is a well-known rally and speedway rider in Switzerland. No one would give this delicate woman the credit to be able to cover the 800 km from Iverdon to Scheveningen in one day. Her husband accompanied her on a 250cc off-road Zündapp. Barbara, always with a cigarette, a typical Englishwoman, had left her father's farm two years ago and made a tour with her AJS from Canada to California, from there to Texas, on to Mexico, back to Texas and finally back to New York. About 27,000 km in 5 months. As a veteran of this trip, she had now come to Holland. She was broke and had therefore approached an airline for a free flight for herself and the AJS. Three days later, the answer was there: the free ticket was enclosed. Anke-Eve, active on the motorcycle for just a year, arrived only three days later. She is a teacher and couldn't leave earlier. She had the heaviest machine and got along very well with it. Marleen rode her father's off-road sidecar combination. She is only 16, her rig 15.

About the competitions: On July 15, this was the first competition: Trial near Arnhem on 125cc off-road DKWs. Murderous fun and a clear victory for Ellen from Frankfurt. Ellen has been around for years, has extensive rallying and off-road experience. Who doesn't know her from the Horex Star Ride, when she rode 4000 km in a week?

The next competition: An orientation run on 16 July. Because of the language jumble, the usual approach hadn't been working (*Editor's note: ie descriptive*). The Dutch had then come up with a picture book approach, with individual pictograms which could be read like maps. It was raining cats and dogs, but an undaunted Barbara won the ride far ahead of the road-experienced Dutch girls Jopy, Willy and Jenny.



Ellen Wetzig (Pfeiffer)

On the 18th, braking and acceleration dexterity tests were held on the race track at Zandvoort. Barbara won both ahead of Ellen and Jenny. The single-cylinder and the 350 were clearly superior, even though Juliette and Anke-Eve veritably laboured to swing their heavy BMWs through the slalom poles. Marleen held up very nicely with the sidecar, especially when you consider that her father does not approve of braking with the front brake, which therefore did not work. A little less fuss on the part of her numerous family members who were present, would be better for the girl. She really can ride, but it's not good when you constantly hear from your family at the age of 16 that you are a star. They may not have understood the cheerfulness of the meeting and the fun part. The two tests were followed by the training for the women's race on the following Sunday. The greatest thing was the training of the three 350s: Jenny, Ellen, Barbara. Jenny, a rascally cutie pie with a cheeky nose and wavy hair on the singing Jawa, and Ellen with her dry Frankfurt humour, on the no-longer-new Resident. They romped about like teddy bears, and it was terrific, how Ellen, who rode the track for the first time, hounded Jenny. Sometimes one in front, sometimes the other. In the end, Jenny's routine prevailed, she ended 100 m ahead of Ellen. Together they came to the finish tower, stopped, looked at each other and... burst out

laughing. No dead seriousness, but murderously fun. Barbara's AJS didn't quite get along, although Barbara almost completely disappeared behind her headlight. In the evening she walked around looking for larger main jets. It was fun to see how she disassembled her carburettor into all components within five minutes and reassembled it. She was now ahead in the overall ranking and of course wanted to look good in the road race on Sunday.

The 19th of July was a kind of rest day, it only involved participation in the Pijpensterrit to Gouda Star Ride. The girls rode in a group to the obligatory controls and grabbed the big trophy in the evening for the overall victory in front of a Solingen club, who were amazed that their pot went for a ride because of a bunch of girls. Juliette got the trophy for the individual ranking, because she had had the longest journey.

July 20th should have been the road race. Unfortunately, it didn't happen. Kudos to the Dutch, who had the courage to advertise a race for women on a public race day. The low starting numbers of the race programme belonged to the girls. Regarding the mode of the Zandvoorter Sterrenrace (*Editor's note: Star Race*) the following should be noted: There are so-called 'stars' in Zandvoort, which are pin awards that are obtained for achieving a certain laptime, for example an 80s pin



for the 80s section, the 90s pin for a laptime in the 90s. So you can always compete for the next higher pin. Jopy for example already had the 90s pin and tried to get over the 100. In the morning there was another training. First the men's 125cc, then the 250cc. And then it was the girls' turn. All of them were a bit pale, Barbara looked ill, Willy was unusually quiet, Anke-Eve swallowed with a dry throat. While the girls pushed their machines and crash helmets for inspection, it had started to rain, and as they waited on their already running machines for the entry into the track, gusts of rain poured down the slope. At that moment, the organiser cancelled the race. Not only the women's race, as one would think, but all races in general. One can be in two minds over such a decision. It should be admitted that the Zandvoort track, even in dry condition, is dicey and results in an unusually large number of falls. And the organiser will have been afraid of the responsibility, to let girls onto the disgusting track in a rainstorm for a road race. In any case, it is a pity, because in this way the first road race for girls did not come about, after it was actually scheduled against so much probability. Jopy cut a gloomy face: the WIMA meeting lacked its crowning glory. At the same time, however, she had red cheeks again: the wait before the start had upset all their stomachs.

The cancellation of the race also brought mathematical difficulties. It was decided to evaluate the times achieved in the training on July 18th. Although this was not ideal but only the best possible solution, because with the few rounds of training it was hardly possible for the foreigners to catch up with the track knowledge of the Dutch women, who had been training on the ring every week for months. But no one was bothered by this circumstance, which corresponded to the light-hearted and un-grouchy atmosphere of the whole meeting. There had been a 100 lap on the 18th, ridden by Jenny on the 350 Jawa. Jenny had never got over 100 km/h, but in the hunt with Ellen

the threshold to the desired 100 needle was crossed. Ellen was unlucky and remained with 99.97 average just below the 100. The class over 350 rode consistently a bit slower than the 350s, even Jopy with the still relatively handy single-cylinder Velocette. 350 seems to be the optimal size for a women's motorcycle.

In the evening the prizes were awarded. The scoring method was not easy, as heavy and light, solo and sidecar machines had competed with each other. Barbara Batt from England and her AJS won the trophy. The title is in good hands with Barbara, she has won three out of five competitions and was undoubtedly the best rider of the meeting. Of the rest, Ellen made the strongest impression. Her uncompromising, cold-blooded riding style was less elegant and not as eye-catching as the very harmonious style of Jopy and Jenny, but possibly a few notches tougher and dashier. The most interesting to look at was Juliette, who can barely touch the ground with her feet when the R 50 is jacked up; she rides the BMW almost sitting on the tank, like a racehorse. Not overly fast and far from reaching the limits of her ability, thoughtful and clean: Anke-Eve on the heavy R 69. Willy had the smallest machine: she suited her bike as if it was tailor-made. A bombshell spectacle: Mrs Han, mother of two children, with the Jawa on the Zandvoortring and an average of over 80! And the 16-year-old Marleen on the off-road sidecar rig, handlebars like antlers, practically without any front brake. Her time in Zandvoort: 71 and more. By the way, she does not have a driver's licence, but a DMV card (*Editor's note: Deutscher Motorsport Verband = German Motor Sport Federation*). That's possible.

On the 21st they all went home, Barbara with the trophy in a cardboard box on the luggage rack. And they all want to come back next year.



1959 West Germany, Nürburgring, end of September

Ingeborg wrote this for Das Motorrad.

Our girls at the Nürburgring 'As long as we have fun!'

This was the motto of the WIMA meeting of motorcycle-riding ladies from all over Europe in 1959, which took place for the first time at the Nürburgring in Germany at the end of September. This time there were twelve girls who met for a happy weekend. Jopy Deijs-van Dinter from Holland had already come a few days earlier to get things ready and to prepare the small competitions that were to be held.

Saturday passed with training rides around the ring, and it was agreed to start the speed competition at 8 am on Sunday morning. When I looked out of the window the next morning, there was thick fog, and we all know what that means at the Nürburgring. But still, it was on, in the hope that the fog would rise. Three laps would be ridden and the best time would be evaluated. It started with a one-minute interval. Jopy was the first to start, who had sold her Velocette Venom because it was too heavy for her to ride in the city. She now tried a Jawa 350cc. Jopy drives very cleanly without risking anything, unlike her sister Jenny, who always laughs, has jokes up her sleeve, and squats on her machine like a little leprechaun. Jenny drives a Jawa 250cc, but had borrowed a 350cc Jawa for this competition, with which she drove an 86 kp/h lap. Alas, she had bad luck. While the WIMA girls were doing their laps, a Wiesbaden car club was on the track at the same time plus some daredevil Vespa riders. When Jenny came around a bend, one of these Vespas was trudging around like a bowling ball in the middle of the track. The driver just disappeared into the hedge. Jenny



slammed on the brakes; the track was damp from the foggy rain, and she slipped and crashed a few metres off the track. Now she arrived at the start crying, because the borrowed machine had received several, albeit insignificant, scratches and the Vespa fellow had spoiled her laptime. The owner of the borrowed Jawa comforted her so nicely and warmly, that after 10 minutes everything was forgotten.

The youngest member of the WIMA family came with a brand new Hercules K101. The machine had less than 2500 km under its belt, but Gisela Battis from Cologne coped very well. Gisela is 19 years old and has been riding on a Maico as a pillion, later on a R26 for two years. One day fate wanted the R26 to disappear on the horizon, and Gisela now had to go for walks with her mother, with whom she lives alone. That wasn't quite the right thing to do. Motorcycling was so nice! And now Mum and Gisela



decided that she had to come up with her own machine. She quickly got the driver's licence, and then got a machine. Gisela is a secretary in an office and finished her apprenticeship not so long ago; she didn't have much money, so went to the bank. Yes, she can get the money, but mum has to sign. But at the bank they read 'for motorcycle purchase', and they backtrack. Girls and motorcycles! (I can just see the furrowed brows of the Philistines there.) She should rather provide for a dowry! What now? Give up on the dream? No, Mum and Gisela scraped all the money together, the deposit was there – and Gisela got her K101. And now Gisela can go wherever she wants. Gisela rides with her motorcycle, mum comes by train – and then they both camp. I think that's a very touching story, to have such an understanding mum for a girl's hobby – it must be very rare.

Let me tell you about each of the 12 WIMA meeting participants:

Little Yvonne Parrot from England, who won the Motorrad cup for the longest journey, is only 19 years old. She is a member of another WIMA group, the London Ladies Motorcycle Club, who have about 60 members in the London metropolitan area alone. Yvonne is from West Livingston and owns a 200cc Tiger Cub where she burned her clutch at the rally she was at the previous Sunday. Yvonne had been terribly sad that she could not go to Europe, but her brother had taken pity on her and lent her his AJS. I have to say, that she did not handle it as if she was riding it for the first time. When I asked what her parents said about her sport, she said, 'Oh, my mother is a bit nervous when I ride, but since she knows that I like to do it and that I am careful, she says nothing'

Madame Yvette Gadras from France came from very far, namely from the French Atlantic coast at La Rochelle, together with her husband. She rides an R69 solo. She came repeatedly to me and stroked first my machine and then her fuel sign and said 'machine good'. Apart from that, we could not understand each other. But the shared enthusiasm for our machines was international. You might say, that Yvette actually deserved the trophy for the longest journey, but we thought it was only fair to award it to Yvonne from England, because she came all alone, while Yvette took turns riding with her husband.

Ellen Wetzig (later Pfeiffer) from Frankfurt is not a complete stranger to us, because she has been riding for a long time and took part in many competitions. There is not much to say about Ellen; I don't think she thinks much of 'chatting', but

rather prefers to ride one more lap on the ring. Unfortunately, she had some bad luck during training on Saturday, skidded slightly and had to walk around with a plaster on her nose as a punishment. Jopy was always a bit afraid for her and was happy when she arrived safely back at the start and finish. Ellen rode with her already somewhat older Horex Resident 350 at a quite remarkable laptime of almost 84 km/h.

Oh yes, and then we have Ilse Altrath with her KS601 and her sidecar partner Christa. Ilse is supposed to know how to ride, because she is the wife of Hans Altrath, who is well known in his own right as a KS specialist in the Ruhr area.

Wily Parson from near Amsterdam was almost the last to ride around the beautiful Eifel course. She limped terribly, because on her trip to the Nürburgring she had suffered something similar to a torn ligament on her foot. 'But I didn't want to let it to spoil the fun, even if it hurts!' she said, when she could hardly follow the fox on foot during the Fox Hunt (*Editor's note: off-road rally*).

Our readers all know Anke-Eve Goldmann by now, who drives a great R69 on which she can only ride by almost lying down on the giant tank. She is a teacher by profession – I had imagined a lady with a pince-nez on her nose, but such a character would hardly have ridden the Nürburgring in 15 minutes 13 seconds, which is an average of almost 90 km/h.

In the meantime, the WIMA girls could hardly be found among the many motorcyclists who were suddenly there. Who were we missing? These were the active off-road riders we all know so well. For example, Olga Hagen, Helga Klima or Helga Geissler from Augsburg, who was quite active just a year ago. We were all the more pleased that our 62-year-old Ilse Thouret, who was the only woman to win a bronze medal at the International Six Days Trial before the war, did not miss the opportunity to call on us at the Nürburgring.

We have found that all prejudices, all problems, all worries and sorrows become trifles when such casual cheerfulness and such uncomplicated joy in a common hobby ensures that borders and contrary world views disappear. Although we didn't all understand each other linguistically, we looked at each other, laughed heartily and still spoke the same language. Now I'm asking those of you who are racking your brains over seemingly unsolvable problems in society, politics and life: Don't you want to take us as a good example?



1960 The Netherlands, Scheveningen 30 July-7 August

Report by Anke-Eve Goldmann written for Das Motorrad.

Participants: Jopy Deijs-van Dinter (NL), Jenny Steenbeeke (NL), Han Clavan (NL), Norah Gill (GB), Martha Frei (CH), Gisela Battis (DE), Johanna Eitel and Renate Brieger (DE), Ilse Altrath (DE), Anke-Eve Goldmann (DE)

Since there are not many motorcycle-riding ladies, WIMA membership is within manageable limits, but despite this intimacy, the international composition protects the club from any provincial narrowness. This happy synthesis also characterized the WIMA meeting in Holland: only 10 girls participated, but from four different countries. There were three newcomers this time: Martha Frei from Winterthur, a 20-year-old Swiss girl, Johanna Eitel and Renate Brieger had come from Germany with a KS, and England was represented this time by Norah Gill from Birmingham, a fidgety, dark-haired whirlwind with laughing eyes and an insanely accelerated Ariel two-stroke twin. Like two years ago, everyone lodged together in the Pension Clavan in Scheveningen under the maternal-sisterly care of Mrs. Han Clavan, who turned the buttons of her cooker in the mornings and evenings, and the throttle grip of her Jawa in between.

The WIMA meeting kicked off with a rally to Scheveningen. How entralling it is to show up as a woman with the control card in her hand at gas stations, post offices or police stations and to take in the flabbergasted speeches and faces of the local fellows - this can only be felt by someone who has tried



Above and below: *Anke-Eve Goldmann*





1961 West Germany, Hockenheimring 21-22 May

Participants: Ilse Altrath (Recklinghausen), Jopy Deijs-van Dinter (Holland), Johanna Eitel (Geilenkirchen), Anke-Eve Goldmann (Wiesbaden), Ivette Gavras (St. Maritime near La Rochelle in France), Norah Gill (Birmingham), Ingrid Schwarz (Bingen) and Ellen Wetzig (Frankfurt).

Mary Black wrote this for The Motorcycle Magazine in GB.

Girls Go Dicing

Few they may be, but the girls of the Women's International Motorcycle Association make up for their lack of numbers by sheer energy.

This year, for instance, the annual meeting of the continental section was held near Hockenheim, Germany, and the highlight of the weekend was the road race which the girls traditionally hold among themselves. Since the German Grand Prix had been held at Hockenheim a week previously, the organising club and the local police were persuaded to supply timing equipment, marshals and even the official German G.P. chequered flag. Solo and sidecar races were arranged and, proudly reports Anke-Eve Goldmann, 'none of the ladies fell off!' Britain was represented by Mrs Norah Gill of the South Birmingham Club, who was credited with the best 250cc lap – at 60.64 mph – with a standard Ariel Arrow. And that, on a wet track is a really excellent showing.

it herself. The smallest participating machine won the rally: the Hercules with Gisela Battis in the saddle.

The regularity test on Monday on the island of Vorne required two rounds of any lap-speed on a 25 km long ring road that were as similar in time as possible. The result was very close: the top five finishers were only fifteen seconds apart. The 'most regular' woman, however, was Han. The orientation trip on Tuesday went in two stages through the middle of the flourishing South Holland. Wednesday was dominated by Zandvoort. The time test over four laps provided for two classifications: run-in and fastest lap. Three girls started together. Very soon Jenny, winner of this competition two years ago, was ahead of the pack, but Martha gave her a make-or-break fight. The Jawa with the tall pistons was about as fast as the Triumph. Jenny was the first to cross the finish line, five metres behind was Martha.

For the Fox Hunt on Thursday, we rode about 150 km to Grave, but unfortunately the sun had dried out the marked route so much, it was pointless to do it. Instead, a slow-riding competition was improvised, which Jo won. With that, the competitions were over. Ilse Altrath was determined the overall winner of the WIMA meeting in 1960 and fiercely celebrated at the award ceremony.

On Friday, the police demonstrated how to swerve professionally with car and sidecar on a road as slippery as glass, and we were even allowed to swerve along too. Afterwards we were served coffee, and the Mijnheer police captain availed himself in person to escort the girls through Rotterdam with a squeaky-clean R 60 team. I pinched myself, but I hadn't dreamed it: a police chief escorted a motorcycle club through a big city by motorcycle! Oh wonderful Holland, everything about you is gracious, even your policemen!

Saturday saw the most incredible metamorphosis of this most beautiful WIMA meeting. Although the motorcycles were still parked in dense heaps around the guest house in the Badhuiskade, oily Amazons have disappeared. Instead, one could see lovely creatures in fragrant clothes coming in and going out. This is hard to believe and perhaps only to be blamed on the Genever, which is brewed so excellently in Holland...





on a journey of four fast laps. With high water flags behind them, they roared over the track, swept round the east curve and dusted through the city curve, so that the barricades, who are used to such things, opened their mouths and noses!

Eight girls from the 35 of the WIMA in Europe were invited by their 'Captain' Jopy, to the annual meeting of the WIMA. Ivette from La Rochelle on the French Atlantic coast covered the longest distance (1142 km). The motorsport club Mauer near Heidelberg – we know it from its great off-road events – had reserved an entire hotel for them, gave them a wonderful welcome and spared no time or effort in organising everything that could be organised there. The Badischer Motorsportclub reached into their club pocket and donated the costs for the racetrack, insurance and barrier measures – and dear lords of creation, that was very good for all of us, including those of us who weren't actively there as spectators! How nice is the feeling that we girls were also able to create a motorcycle home in

this way! (By the evening of Whit Monday, a real, old motorbike master and his son, instead of a Whitsun celebration, dismantled the engine for a total of DM 18 for Jopy in Zuzenhausen, fetched spare parts from far away and got the elephant running again!) Excuse me, you hard-boiled fellows, for secretly wiping away a tear of emotion.

On Monday, Ilse won a Fox Hunt organised by MSC Mauer, and there were even wonderful honorary prizes. I've been on a lot of motorcycle adventures before, but the 1961 WIMA meeting in particular impressed me. They came from France, from England, from Holland – they came to have fun, to see each other and to be happy, no club cheating, no gossip – so completely, completely different – just happy. Not even a solemn speech! No advertisement. That's what I call a sporting spirit!

I would like to make one last remark: if anyone ever turns up their noses at us girls and women who enjoy riding motorcycles by ourselves, then let me know their address. I'll send them a letter and pictures of the WIMA meeting in 1961, and of my friends from Europe with their machines. It's nothing crazy – it's wonderful, just joie de vivre! Does a girl look different on a mountain, on a sailing ship, on an aeroplane? There you are. It was one of the best days of the year for me!

1962

Mary Black's article about the 1961 rally ended with this: 'Next gathering of the WIMA is at Easter, 1962; the venue, Switzerland. Make a note of it girls.'

However no rally was held due to too many of the women being either pregnant or breastfeeding.



Inge Rogge wrote this for Das Motorrad.

This is what sportsmanship looks like!

On Whitsunday, at 11 am, the Hockenheimring came alive: barriers cordoned off all access roads, red barrier flags waved, timing marshals got into position at the start and finish. Race manager Erwin Fuchs from the Baden Motorsport Club unwrapped the signal flags and there were even police there to cordon off. Then it started. Five solo machines were sent



1963 The Netherlands, Scheveningen 27 July-4 August

Anke-Eve Goldmann wrote this report for Das Motorrad: It was the fifth since 1958 – last year none took place. By the way, this is why serious motorcycling will never be a really significant occupation for a woman: most girls had just had babies last year or were expecting...

Again, it was the private boarding house of the indomitable Han Clavan, which was the week's headquarters: fifty metres from the beautiful beach of Scheveningen in Holland. For eight evenings, the old house echoed with the exuberant chatter of the motorcycle-riding women's rooms. A whole bunch of new faces have appeared at WIMA, the one prettier than the other. But the WIMA week was won by a veteran (gee, Ellen, you won't be resenting me for this, will you?), who had already attended in 1958 as Miss Wetzig and now arrived here as Mrs Pfeiffer, and mother of two hulking sons. The famous Horex Resident of before had given way to a venerable Norton Dominator 500. Three victories in the individual competitions were Ellen's to snatch: a long-distance award gaining her 7560 points for 1350 kilometres, the slalom in Zandvoort and the orientation ride.

Second place in the overall standings went to a 'newcomer': Birgit Ericsson from Sweden. A very quiet girl. She rode 1363 km from a corner somewhere west of Stockholm to Holland. At home, she lives alone as a technical draughtswoman and additionally goes to an engineering school. To get to Holland, she sold her R51/3, exchanged it for an old Ardie 350 and financed her trip with the surplus. The tools she brought with her would have been enough to disassemble and reassemble the Ardie into all the individual parts in the middle of Lapland. And with this Ardie, whose pistons emitted highly suspicious noises, Birgit rode the best time in Zandvoort in the speed test: amongst others a lap of 2:38.9 = 94.97 km/h.

And there was another discovery: Renée Fierant, a hairdresser from Zaltbommel in Holland, who had contested the competitions with a BSA 350, appeared for the off-road ride on Friday with a motocross Matchless. With this machine gun, she dredged through the half-metre-deep sand of the dunes of Nordwijkerhout, so that we all lost sight and sound of her. This always well-groomed girl, who dresses with taste and flair, seems to have no nerves at all. Here is a great off-road talent on the rise, with ambitions for motocross. I think only the French Claire Blaise and the Englishwoman Jill Savage



have done something similar so far. Bravely Ellen, Birgit and Jo ground through the sand, but it didn't help.

Renée on her thunderbox made everyone else look like amateurs. Next year we'll be expecting them all again: the mischievous Renate from Dinslaken; the indestructible Dorothea on her KS which behaves like a toy motorbike in her hands; the always laughing Norah from England; and certainly again a few new faces. And by then, Captain Jopy, the good spirit of WIMA, will surely have hatched some more surprises...



1964 West Germany, Wasserkuppe (around 7 May)

This is a piece by Louise Scherbyn in the newsletter about the 1964 Continental rally: No report has been received from the Continental Captain Jopy Deijs-van Dinter concerning the results of the Continental rally held at Fulda, Germany. However, Ellen Pfeiffer has reported she had a wonderful time and has sent some fine photos of members who attended the Rally, and a report of the trial results for which I am deeply grateful.

We are happy to report that Juliette Steiner is feeling much better from her serious injuries due to last year's accident. She is now learning to drive a car which will be of considerable help to her in getting about.

FULDA TRIAL RESULTS - May 7, 1964: 1st Place - Kirsten Peschel, 2nd - Ellen Pfeiffer, 3rd - Jopy Deijs-van Dinter

This report was printed in *Das Motorrad*, author unknown

WIMA meeting at the Wasserkuppe

Once again, the WIMA girls had their meeting. This time we went to the Wasserkuppe (*Editor's note: a mountain in Hesse, the highest peak in the Rhön mountains near Fulda*) and everyone, but everyone came. It is a great pleasure to see how the rush increases from year to year, because there were many new faces and many new machines this year. The meeting was not quite as international as in previous years, because apart from Jopy from Holland and Kirsten from Denmark, everyone came from our vicinity (if you still want to include Hamburg and Pforzheim in the vicinity of Fulda). Also, you could have thought you were at a BMW meeting, because the little Honda and the Kreidler didn't stand out too much in the big bunch, but wait - two Bonneville's were there as well.

In any case, a leisurely time was spent together, and the area around the Wasserkuppe was simply ideal for romping around. We stayed on the Rhönring (*Editor's note: a circular local street*), but despite that, a few trees were still standing afterwards. Even the spirit of the Rhön (*Editor's note: a folkloric mountain*



spirit usually depicted as a bearded old man) flattened his ears in amazement when he was faced with a company of leather ladies. With a smile, however, he later put up with our quiet songs on the lute and sang along vigorously.

In addition to a trip across the Rhön and along the zone border (*Editor's note: i.e. the border to East Germany*), there was also an off-road competition on our programme. Three laps had to be ridden twice on a very nice circuit with obstacles. It was a joy to watch the girls hurling their heavy machines around the course. Many a husband was left speechless in amazement when he saw how quickly and skilfully his delicate wife took the most difficult hurdles.

Unfortunately, the end with the big award ceremony came far too quickly, but we are sure that we will all see each other again next year. Kirsten Peschel from Denmark was the overall winner. A quick holiday tip for people on a tight budget and with romantic minds, who love old buildings, low traffic and beautiful areas: a ride to the Rhön is not a mistake!

1965 West Germany, Oberreifenberg, 25–31 July

Anne Greenwood from WIMA GB wrote this article for WIMA News.

My fun at the WIMA Continental rally July 1965

Dennis and I arrived at the rally in Germany at about 5 pm on Monday. It was held at Oberreifenberg, which is a little village in Hesse in the Taunus Mountains. While we were in the hotel, one or two more arrived, making eight members that evening: Christel Berg, Sigrid Romca, Christa Spathe, Ellen of course, Kirsten Peschel, Marianne Gruttman, Irene Hartwich and myself.

Tuesday morning was the Orientation Run. We were all given a map and a list of places through which we had to pass. There were four control posts where we had to get our cards stamped and we had to do the route in three hours, marks being deducted for being either too early or too late. We had quite an amusing time doing this because in one of the towns we got lost, and as Dennis speaks no German at all and I speak very little, you can imagine the state we were in! Eventually we found our way and completed the course without much trouble.

On Wednesday we all set off to Laubuschbach where we held our trial. This was set out on a football pitch and some rough ground nearby. Sigrid fell on one of the bumpy sections, and a day or two later she was sporting some brightly coloured bruises on her leg. Her bad luck must have brought me good luck, because I managed to stay on, even though it was the first time I had done anything of this sort, and I was very nervous. When we had finished, we all went down to the village for a jolly good feed, and by golly I was ready for it.

That evening after our meal, we went down into the village again to the Post Hotel. Ellen took her guitar and Christel's husband took his accordion. We all sang and talked so long that it was two o'clock in the morning before we went up the hill to bed.

Friday's event was the Picture Search Run which consisted of seven pictures on a card with no location indicated at all. What we had to do was find out where they were and go there. At each of the places someone stamped our card. The winner was the one who did it in the least mileage. Dennis and I were lucky enough to find two men who knew a little English and were able to tell us where most of the places were.



In the evening was an apron auction. There were some really nice ones from as far away as New Zealand, Australia and America, plus those from England and Germany. That was a great deal of fun because of the modelling show put on by Sigrid's husband, Gerhard Romca, who paraded across the tables wearing the aprons. Into this cheerful scene came a message from Wiesbaden that Anke-Eve had just had a baby girl!

Saturday was a free day so we went shopping and to the Frankfurt Zoo. Our prize giving was during the evening at the Weilquelle Hotel. It came as a big surprise to me that I was the overall winner of the Rally. I was given a laurel wreath with my name on purple ribbons, various certificates and trophies, and the merriment continued well into the morning.



1966 The Netherlands, Aalst, 19–22 May

The report is by Continental Captain Ellen Pfeiffer and translated for WIMA News by Anke-Eve Goldmann: Despite the West German Grand Prix at Hockenheim, despite the 1000 km race and the BMW Reunion in Munich, the 1966 WIMA Continental rally attracted women from Austria, Holland and Germany. They gathered on the marvellous camping ground of our Dutch member, Renee, to spend some very enjoyable days.

First on our programme was an Orientation Run all over the Netherlands. This meant riding to scheduled control points using the shortest way possible. The ideal line was 140 km long and led through beautiful Dutch countryside, strictly using small roads and dam tracks in parts so narrow that the sidecar outfits had to take care. The event was won by Jo from Ubach (NL), who is an old hand at this type of competition. She did 160 km – 20 more than the absolute minimum. Her victory proved an old truth – do the Orientation Runs alone with nobody interfering with your decisions. All these runs hitherto performed were won by solo riders; the sidecars being slower came in further down the list.

Next day, we staged the traditional Fox Hunt. There were marks on the roads such as 'wolf', 'mouse', 'hedgehog', 'ape', etc., which had to be found. This run was about 50 km long and ended in a large park, where a huge white elephant splashed water in a basin. A rose handkerchief was fastened to his tail, and this very handkerchief had to be found. What do you think a motorcycle rider thinks when she sees that elephant after so much painful searching, trying and reading marks? Well only one of us – Dores from Neviges – had the brain power, rushed over and was enthusiastically celebrated. The other less fortunate fox hunters – with blisters under their feet – consequently trotted to the next cafe to restore their aching limbs.

Next afternoon with spirits and stomachs refreshed, the Motocross started. The track went into long deep grass, sand and rubbish. Penalty points were given for each fault. Renee started on the motocross mount of her husband – and how she can gun that monster! Unfortunately the Lito was too

fast so Renee received several penalties. Renate from Kassel showed skill on the side-car outfit. And then came Dores leaving no chance to the others. Though she had no penalty-free run, she comfortably won the Motocross.

On the evening of that particularly eventful day, we all sat together in Renee's saloon and looked at the photos of earlier WIMA meetings. Discussion grew hot about the topic of trophies awarded to women in motorcycle competitions. Many girls compete with combo outfits, having their husbands in the sidecar, thus always running the risk of arousing disbelief. Who will believe that a tiny doll rides the huge outfit over hundreds of kilometres while her husband sits in the sidecar twiddling his thumbs? This is why we believe the girls ought to prefer solo competition. Naturally the husbands protested against such suggestions.

Sunday morning, we had a Picture Search run. Pictures were distributed, which had to be used for finding certain signposts and the numbers of which had to be written down (each Dutch signpost does have such a number). The fastest girl won. And this was Jo again, who scored a clear win. With this, she became overall winner of the WIMA Continental rally and received the main trophy. The celebration of the winner and handing over of trophies was immediately after the last competition.

After the last sound of the hymns had died away, the tents were packed. And just avoiding the big rain, the last motorcycle left the lovely spot which had given us so much pleasure. The silence had again taken over Aalst, and the girls on their motorcycles were gone.



1967 Czechoslovakia, Červená on Orlik Reservoir, 11–17 June

This was the first rally where participation of two WIMA members from the former East Germany was possible, because it took part in the Eastern Block - they were not allowed to attend meetings in West Germany or Western Europe.

The following report is by Ellen Pfeiffer and was provided by Brigitte Döhler. The rally was organised by Czech rider Lida Abrahamova who also wrote a report for WIMA News. Participants: Continental Captain Ellen Pfeiffer, Brigitte Döhler (née Walther), Erhart Krumpholz (a famous racer) and Helga Heinrich-Steudel from East Germany, Jo Johnen from Übach-Palenberg, Susie Stockl from Traunstein, Traudl Schuster, Traudl Koller from Austria, three Finnish and two French ladies, Lida Abrahamova.

Once again, the girls from all over the world came together for a performance test and a special kind of motorcycle show. ČZ (Jawa model), MZ, Csepel (Hungarian motorcycle), Honda and BMW riders found their way to South Bohemia to the Orlik Reservoir near Červená.

The Orlik Lake is the largest artificial lake in Czechoslovakia with a length of 70 kilometres. There are numerous campsites and manor houses on its banks. We stayed in one of them on the slopes where Červená once flooded. The reception was very warm, I would almost say enthusiastic. They came from Budapest, Prague, Vienna, East and West Germany and brought a little variety to the monotonous Jawa traffic with their motorcycles. Nothing against Jawa, on the contrary. Perhaps only this model can withstand the road conditions in the long run. Unfortunately, you don't see such a large number of motorcyclists in Czechoslovakia.

The first day was all about laziness. We had time for swimming, boating and getting to know each other. We took a little trip to Písek and in the evening, Erhart Krumpholz showed us some MZ-films from various Six-Day Trials in England, Erfurt and Sweden. Then there was a skills ride on the programme, with seesaw, board, slalom, water ditch and a circuit that had to be ridden twice on a ČZ, which was available to everyone. The winner was Traudel from Vienna.

Next we accepted an invitation to the ČZ plant in Strakonice. It became a bigger affair, with a reception by the director, a factory tour, a demonstration of the motocross machines and a large banquet. We were allowed to ride the motocross machines after the demonstration and made great use of them. At first with mixed feelings, as it was a completely new riding experience, but then it was difficult to get the girls to stop. The mayor of Volyně finally succeeded, by coming with a box of trophies and thus laying his admiration at our feet. The motocross terrain is in his district and he is an avid motorcyclist himself.

The next day brought an excursion to the Hluboká Castle and to České Budějovice (Budweis), the metropolis of South Bohemia, with its historic town centre from the Middle Ages. Here we had to fight our way through swarms of spectators, and Honda-Susie was besieged by autograph hunters. We were



happy when we could crawl into an inn to enjoy the typical Bohemian food and the world-famous Budwar beer. But even there, the peace lasted only until the chair collapsed under Jo. Still nobody can tell, was it the wobbly chair or the breakfast garlic?

Finally, a stroll through Prague was planned like an underwater battle. But as soon as we arrived at the parking lot, bright sunshine came out and a wonderful day awaited us in Prague. Under the expert guidance of Lida, we got to know some of the sights of the hundred-towered city. We spent the last evening with ČZ-film screenings, board games and funny songs to Lotte's guitar.

All too quickly it was time to say goodbye. Before the journey home, all the loose screws and lamps were tightened, and then everyone blew away like the wind towards home. Helga and Brigitte, the racing riders, were already thinking about their next race, Traudl about the upcoming wedding, Christel about the broken frame, Bom about the motorboat and the others tried out the newly collected recipes of the Czech and Hungarian cuisine in their fantasy.





1968 West Germany, Nürburgring (Drees), 23–26 May

This Continental division rally report was written by Ellen Pfeiffer and translated into English for WIMA News by Lida Abrahamova: Over the seas and under the water, the girls arrived from all directions with smiling faces, although the clouds hung low. After the last tent was put up and the last motorcycle was in the shelter, the sun appeared and blew away the clouds.

Our packed programme started on the next day with a Mini-Star-Ride, and the sun shining high in the sky. The second day was a day on the Nürburgring with three laps of the Grand Prix Circuit, each 22 km, making 66 km in all. The idea was to keep a constant time for the first lap. After each lap a card had to be time stamped. The average time was 16–23 minutes and was managed well by the participants. We were all very proud of our achievements, in spite of the fact that we were far from reaching the circuit record.

We had an excellent meal later in a nice restaurant in Drees. There was a treasure hunt in the afternoon. We rode across fields and through forests and had to answer some questions on our way. This competition was a big handicap for the three English girls (Jean, Janet and Shirley), because they didn't speak German and we were lacking the correct English words. However, they were great at riding. In this specific discipline, the more attentive girls were more successful than the fast ones. Three girls received the full number of good points – Susie, Jo and Doris.

The weather was still wonderful on Saturday for the Orientation Ride. In the meantime, Agnès from France and Reni, who lives near Nürburgring, arrived. Reni has a baby, so she had to leave after a short visit. We were given a route card plus a map, and at one-minute intervals we set off to find our way. We had to pass through a certain number of signature checks. The whole course covered 100 km and had to be done within three hours. This brought five points for each of us, so the results were, before the last competition took place: Doris with 35 points leading, ahead of Jo with 34 and Traudl with 32 points.

In the afternoon, we built our gymkhana (slalom) course in a field near the Nürburgring, which had to be completed twice by each of us. This competition became indeed a triumph for Shirley who made the fastest time on a Triumph. It was a feast to the spectators' eyes to watch the dexterity of the three English



girls, Shirley, Jean and Janet, in handling their motorcycles. Margit Blum lost no points, and with a very favourable time in both courses she became the final winner, one point ahead of Agnès. The list of the results shouldn't be considered as a real classification, for we are all very equal in riding. It's only a term of reference for the arrangement of our various awards.

The last evening found the whole WIMA family at the banquet. The Barbour suits were replaced by miniskirts, and the WIMA comedians teased each other and kept us all laughing far into the night.

1969 Austria, Ampflwang, 17–23 August



Anke-Eve Goldmann translated this report written by Ellen Pfeiffer for WIMA News: It must have hurt Lida Abrahamova very much when we moved the 1969 WIMA rally to Austria, as she had already organised everything at Červená. (Editor's note: we assume this was because of the Soviet invasion and subsequent occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968.) She seems to have forgiven us, since she came to Austria and even brought some of her friends. The meeting place was the small village of Ampflwang. The camping enthusiasts had a meadow to themselves, just behind the Stehrer Inn. Thanks to perfect organisation by Christa Spathe, all schedules kept to time.

We started with a cross-country ride through rough terrain. The lap had to be completed twice. The girls nudged their heavy road bikes elegantly around the course and nobody was surprised to see Jana win. She managed to get her Trials bike around the course without any penalties, displaying grand style. Riding the fastest time as well, she left the rest of the group behind her. At this point I would like to mention the good care taken of us by the Ampflwang Motorcycle Club. This evening, we had an opulent dinner at a reception by the Austrian Motorsports operating director, Rolf Arnold. He told us how proud he was to have WIMA in Austria for the first time.

On the following day we rode to Salzburg in order to visit one of the salt mines. When we arrived, the mine was closed due to overcrowding. We decided not to wait and did a most exhilarating ride around the Alpine lakes of the region – Attersee, Mondsee, Wolfgangsee and Fuschlsee. The wonderful weather kept spirits high. On Wednesday we had the Orientation Run. According to a map, several very small villages had to be reached. It turned out that all of us found nine control posts. The 10th, I hope, is not waiting any longer for somebody to pass. In the end we shared the winning points, finishing the night around a campfire.

Then we visited a glass-blowing factory, and at Bad Ischl finally our salt mine. We rode into the mine on long benches. In our mining outfits we were fit for every possible sort of exploration. After that action-packed day, we crawled into our sleeping bags earlier than the day before, because the following day we had plans for a Mini Rally. The task was to build the word 'Stehrer' from the capital letters of towns or villages in the neighbourhood. The fewer kilometres needed, the more points. We all made secret plans, only to find the others in almost the same spots!

Nevertheless, the results were clear enough to decide who was the overall WIMA rally winner: it was Christel Berg. She had been training hard to win for years, and finally she was able to take the trophy home! The large basket purchased in Yugoslavia appeared to be quite useful. The trophy for the longest ride to Ampflwang was a plate given by Rolf Arnold, and it went to Janet, who was the youngest competitor as well. Jana was virtually covered with trophies. In fact, we had so many nice gifts that Christa had a lot to do to distribute everything correctly. Traudl was very happy with the trophy for last place, donated by our international president, Louise. That trophy was so beautiful, that I think we shall have a fervent competition for last place in our future WIMA rallies.

1970 France, Col des Croix 27 July–2 August

WIMA France founder Agnès Acker organised this Continental division rally and wrote the report which Anke-Eve Goldmann translated (we presume for WIMA News). 15 participants came from Austria, Finland, France, GB and Germany.

By Monday afternoon almost everybody has arrived and the first competition, the orientation ride is about to start. You have to find your way from simple sketched maps, through a jumble of 31 crossways covering 12 km. The terrain is narrow field roads, tracks through the woods, meadows, streams and farmyards with squawking hens. The secret control points are patrolled by husbands and boyfriends. Normally the heavy bikes are handicapped on a course like this, but Captain Ellen Pfeiffer manages to be fastest on her BMW R 75/5, followed by two confident off-road Finnish girls.

Tuesday: Mini-Rally. The first four letters of a motorcycle brand of your choice have to be visited with the aid of a local Michelin map. The winner is the rider who has travelled the least km, measured as the crow flies. This competition doesn't ask for speed but intelligent thought. Traudl wins ahead of Edda, Anne and Christel. The local population was not impressed by the popular wave of riding motorcycles in France and were rather annoyed by the invasion of 'Amazons', which didn't make it any easier to collect stamps. Especially if these Amazons were talking in a strange barbaric language. In the evening, basically everybody had stories to tell!

Wednesday: The big day for the special trial. Early in the morning everybody is sniffing the weather, but unfortunately it is dull and grey. Bang on 9 am the mountain trail starts. It is 1.7 km long and needs to be completed twice. The police of Epinal and Remiremont have closed off the road and the TV is

getting cameras and microphones ready.

The French Master of 1965 Paul Wolff is opening the Trial on his Kawasaki 500 and finishes with 1:03.8. But Captain Ellen, an experienced member on the circuit is getting very close with 1:04.9. The final result is: Ellen 1:04.9, second Agnès 1:10.8, third Christel 1:12.4, fourth Anne 1:13.5, fifth Traudl 1:17.0, sixth Marie France 1:22.4, and Edda, whose time was 1:04, was disqualified.

In the afternoon, it was time for the lightweights. Trial: the tricky course is marked with little flags and goes over meadows, slippery rocks (it has been raining) and through shrubbery. Here the Finnish participants feel right at home. Astonishing how they manage the course. Tuula finishes without penalties, followed by Ellen who manoeuvres her BMW like a moped through the terrain with 3 minus points. Then Ninie and Agnès with 5 minus points each, Marie-France with 8 minus points, Jo with 14 minus points.

In the evening everybody relaxes during the slide show about the history of WIMA on the continent from 1958 till now. Late at night Jean Sutton and Shirley Tarrant arrive on their nice Triumphs, accompanied by Jean's husband Dick Sutton, a Six-Day Trials rider.

On Thursday a relaxed ride out is on the agenda. WIMA and company ride through the Vosges and visit Riquewihr where a wine tasting takes place in the cellar and also a visit to the vintage collection of Herr Karl in Barr. Everybody is in a good and relaxed mood whilst enjoying the winding roads riding back to Col des Croix.

Friday is the day of Orientation ride. 12 small villages, marked on a map have to be visited, covering 125 km. There are seven checkpoints and the time limit is 3 ½ hours. With thunderstorms passing by, Jo wins in two hours 52 minutes just ahead of the Finnish Girls Tuula and Raila.

There were also a few theoretical exams to pass on this trial, for example six motorcycles and six racing riders had to be named (with a time limit) or 14 items from a Honda 350 and Kawasaki had to be identified correctly (with the aid of a sketch) and finally you had to get the mixed-up combustion cycle of a two and four-stroke engine in the right order (as quickly as possible). During this task, Traudl, Christl, Tuula and Raila show that they can also use their brains as well as their bodies, when on a motorbike.

But then Christl has covered 200,000 km on a motorbike and the Finnish girls (aged 17 and 18) have been travelling since beginning of July with their awkward bikes. Once they had to dismantle the whole engine on a campsite, which obviously didn't do it any harm. By the way, it was their teacher who sparked their interest in motorcycles. He also accompanied them on their first ride. They were four of them on two bikes and they always drew straws who was going to be pillion rider. Therefore, quite often the huge Matti was pillion whilst a petite student was riding the bike. You have to imagine the faces of the locals, when the Finnish girls were describing how they fixed a tyre at minus 20 degrees ...

On Saturday a few more friends join in; the Debonville couple from the north of France, plus more people from the UK and also from Besançon and Lyon. One of them is Geneviève Delorme on her Honda CB125. Everybody applauds the 'WIMA Woman of the Year 1970', Traudl Schuster who won the Otto Pokal trophy for the furthest travel to the rally. Other prizes



are handed out and films of races and a short film of Dreyer about the beginning of motorbikes are screened. Then it is time to say goodbye. But one thing is certain; we all will meet again in Germany next year, where we will once again laugh, enjoy ourselves on the road and have fun in a pub somewhere. The core point of the meetings is your friendship, which is provided by the common love of motorbikes.

1970 USA, New York 11 July-12 September

The Big Event, WIMA's 20th birthday celebration, took place in New York in 1970. Theresa Wallach, vice president of WIMA wrote about it in WIMA News and the report appeared in the Pearl Booklet.

Our president looked wonderful behind the birthday cake with as many as twenty national flags of the countries represented in the Women's International Motorcycle Association. Louise was dressed in her WIMA blue uniform with colourful insignia on her left sleeve. Seated at her right and left side respectively were Vice President Theresa Wallach, who had ridden her BSA Royal Star 650 miles from Chicago, and American-Canadian Division Captain Faye Rickert who had ridden as passenger with her husband, Martin, on their big Harley Davidson from Meadville. Pioneer rider Mrs. Fay McConn, sat at one end of the top table, and pioneer rider Mrs. Mary James at the other end; she had come more than 3000 miles from Palo Alto. They made everyone feel proud of the spirit of WIMA.



As vice president, I had the honour to propose the toast to Louise. The cake cutting ceremony followed. The tiered cake, iced in white, red and blue looked so very beautiful, it was a pity to eat it. Pioneer rider, Mary James, removed the first flags and picked Great Britain and Belgium, and thoughts went out to those members. Pioneer rider Fay McConn pulled out the flags of France, Canada and Spain and our hearts were with our members over there. Captain Faye removed the flags of Wales, Australia and Czechoslovakia and our thoughts went to these members likewise. Miriam picked out Germany, Switzerland and then Sweden with mutual blessings. Betty gently took the flags of New Zealand, Denmark and Scotland out of the red roses and icing sugar and expressed her hope that it was that way for our members in those countries. Melody took off flags of Finland, Holland and East Germany and held them in her hand and thoughts in her head. It was now my turn and I removed the flags of Austria and Italy. The American flag remained as a centre piece over the insignia of our WIMA. Cheers went up as Louise removed the Stars and Stripes and pierced the cake. She then spoke of her gratefulness for everyone's cooperation in the success of the WIMA and a thank you to all.

In the same newsletter there is a long note of thanks from Louise Scherbyn, WIMA president: This memorable occasion was the highlight of my entire motorcycling life. There have been many happy times and they have been countless, but sometimes one can actually select the happiest moment of all and this was it - making other women motorcycling enthusiasts happy too with the success of joining together their interest in motorcycling into an international organisation, and making it possible for a celebration in every division of WIMA in different parts of the world to honour our 20 years together.

I am indeed very proud of the WIMA and of every member for upholding our principles into making WIMA the fine organisation it is today. May it always continue to be that way. Thank you everyone.

1971 West Germany, Kassel, 25-31 July

The venue for the Continental division rally in 1971 was Hotel Roter Kater, Kassel, West Germany. The hotel is by the river Fulda, in the Wolfsanger area of Kassel. A garden area adjoining the hotel was used as a campsite.

Shirley Tarrant from England wrote a report of the rally for WIMA News: I was the first to arrive at the rally, followed by Captain Ellen (Pfeiffer) R75/S, then came Christel BMW, Robbie R75/S and Agnès (Acker) 350 Suzuki, Yvonne 350 Suzuki, Nini and Janette 175 Honda, Traudl and Hans 350 Yamaha, Edda and Herman BMW. This group were the main participants. Later in the week came Susie 450 Honda and Jo 175 Naico. There were other girls coming and going whom I did not know. Fewer girls and nationalities arrived than there had been in France (1970).

Shirley described the programme of competitive events and visits organised for participants:

- Monday - Fox Hunt. This was a trail of white powder laid on the road approximately 100-200 metres from a junction and participants had to find the road with the powder on it.
- Tuesday - Slalom. Wiggle in and out between oil cans, then up and over a see-saw plank to stop immediately with the front axle on a marker. Then left and winding in and out between the cans placed in curves, followed by a left hander which needed to be taken fast to save seconds, and stop by a plank without knocking it over. Back away from there, wiggle through some more cans, take a ball from Robbie and throw it into a box while moving, and not knocking down surrounding cans. Then over to the finish line.
- Wednesday - Visit to the Hercules monument and some castles in the Kassel area.
- Thursday - Chinese Rally. Following paper road directions consisting of arrow and distances in kms to junctions.
- Friday - Sprint. An unused old road had a 300-metre strip measured out on it, and another 200-metre strip for a run-off at the end. We did one practice run and three timed runs which were then totalled to define the score. Evening entertainment was provided at the hotel and consisted of slides, talks and motor racing films each night.
- Saturday evening was of course prize giving. I was very lucky and happy to receive the first place overall giving me the WIMA Cup and the Otto Pokal Wanderpreis. Agnès was in second place, and third was Ellen. Renate was also presented with a gift from Captain Ellen for her very great efforts in organising the rally. The evening ended about 1.30 am after music and dancing.

1972 Czechoslovakia, Červená, 16-22 July

The Pearl Booklet relates: 'Among the participants was Helga from East Germany who was then the title holder for the 125cc class in her country. Also in evidence was Ellen Pfeiffer, captain of the Continental division, who had managed to collect over a hundred cups and trophies won in all forms of motorcycle sport.'

In an article for Das Motorrad, Ellen Pfeiffer wrote about the 1972 rally. Participants from Finland, Austria, France, East Germany, West Germany and Czechoslovakia met in Červená for the 1972 WIMA Rally in Czechoslovakia.

Ellen described one of the consequences of gathering at an idyllic sounding venue next to the Orlík reservoir, with its deserted sandy beach surrounded by the Bohemian Forest and subtropical summer weather.

The girls who had travelled halfway through Europe on their motorcycles to attend the WIMA meeting could not be persuaded to swap their bikinis for motorcycle clothing before the afternoon. So it happened that human contact, water sports of all kinds and motorcycle stories were more in the foreground than competitions or rides in the surrounding area. Lida (Abrahamova) had put together a nice programme for us and it is only thanks to her that we saw a little bit of the scenic beauty between Pisek and Prague. She also had to literally wrestle a few smaller competitions from us, because she had

to drive us out of the water every time to make a start. And as soon as the skills course was over, the whole club plunged back into the water and was only ready to leave it when it was time for the campfire and the sausage on the spit. We sat around the campfire every evening.

Despite the attraction to the water, they did manage to complete some competitions, including motorcycle orienteering and a Fox Hunt (Shirley Tarrant described this in the 1971 report). And on the final night they held a ball with an award ceremony. Ellen confirmed, 'Jana got the wreath around her freshly washed neck and the big Otto-Pokal. Jo (Johnen) was second, Edda third, level on points with Raila (Rinna). There was a lot of silver and many, many gifts.'

1973 Finland, Pihtipudas, 22-27 July

Frances Popley wrote this about the rally in the 1980 WIMA Pearl Booklet: It was organised by an instructor from Pihtipudas who rejoiced in the name of Matti Viro. Matti was no ordinary teacher; in addition to teaching the more traditional school subjects, he also instructed his pupils in motorcycle riding. He has turned the rough part of his garden into a training track and bought eight tons of Pannonias, complete and in bits which he sells very cheaply to his young disciples. All he asks of them is that they should ride at least 35,000 kms per year. Two of his star pupils, Tuula and Raila (Rinne), have for some years now

WIMA-treffen 1972 in Cervena/CSSR

Agnes Akker, Ji Johnen, Maryonne Reaso

Am Ost-See, umgeben von schmalen Wäldern, erbliden wir für eine Weile die technische Großstadt. Die fuhre Länge unserer Begleitwörter, der mannigfachen Sandstrand und subtropisches Sommerwetter ließ uns fast den Zweck unserer Reise vergessen. Niemand der Mädchen, die mit ihren Motorrädern durch fast Europa gewandert waren, um ein WIMA-Treffen zu besuchen, war vor Abreise zu bewegen den Helm wieder mit Motorradhelmen zu vertauschen. Sie kamen es, daß menschliche Kontakte, Wasserpflanzen aller Art und Motorradgeschichten, dabei im Vordergrund standen als Wettbewerb oder Ausfahrten in die Umgebung.

Lida hatte für uns ein recht schön-tes Programm zusammengestellt, und wir ließen es zu verstehen, daß wir doch noch ein wenig der landschaftlichen Schönheit genießen wollten. Und auch ein paar kleinere Wettbewerbe hat sie uns dann organisiert, so daß wir uns einen Start aus dem Wasser trennen. So erwarteten Mädchen aus Finland, Österreich, Frankreich, DDR, Bundesrepublik und aus-

land. Die CSSR ihre kleinen und großen Motorräder auf einen Fahrbahnstreifen über einen Ger-schichtsaufbau.

Siebzehn von Presse und Reporter, gelang hier Tausch auf ihrer Fahrmaschine der größte Sieg. Sie blieb ohne Sturzpunkte, gelang von Jana (CSSR) auf CZ-Ralle (Finland), ebenfalls Fin-nische, und Traudi (West auf Tri-moto). Eine danach kamen ein-ander, schwerelos mit Sturz-punkten. Sie hatten bei dem Aus-gang der Rennstrecke nicht mehr zu tun. Keine war dabei besen-jet, stürzte sich mit ganzem Kör-per wieder in die Fluten und war erst zur Zeit des Lagerfeuer und der Wurst am Spieß bereit, das Bad zu verlassen.

Auch eine Orientierungsfahrt stand im Programm. Usternaga geht es lange Dornenhecken hin. Die Teilnehmer und die Stra-ßen waren entsprechend. Die ver-gangenen Zeit orientierten wir zuerst als viel zu leicht und schufen dann durch ganz schön herausgen, um nicht zu sehr zu können. Die gesamte an dem Ende, daß sie ohne einen Tri-moto-Ralle in der Finnis stand und nur durch den Lurpen-sammel gereicht werden konnte.

Landet schaffte sie dann ihre Zeit nicht mehr. Zum Schluß hatten wir für die Superorientierung mit ihrer Motor legte sie ihre Zeit hin, an die nur noch Ralle aus Frankreich mit ihrer Honda heran kam. Dann folgten mit neuen grünen Abend Ralle auf BMW und Jana (CSSR) auf CZ. Inge-d-wahl kamen die anderen so ein-geordnet. Abends gab es dann ein Fest, denn es kam noch Be-auch aus der DDR, Balle aus Würzburg mit ihrer MZ, und ganz viel Maryonne aus Frankreich, sie mußte schon am nächsten Morgen wieder weg, um persön-lich an ihrem Arbeitsplatz in Süd-frankreich zu sein.

Auch eine Fuchsjagd konnten wir nicht durchsetzen, wir mußten nach Papiermützen fahren. Wi-der war Ji die Beihelfer und beide gewohnt, dann kamen Jana und Edda. Alice hatte nur auf uns gewartet, um den Fuchse-reicht zu suchen, was dann auch gleich passieren konnte. Si-cher hatten die Damen ihren Tag, denn sie selbst hatte ihr ge-funden und wurde ihr vielleicht ein Heim festhalten.

Abends saßen wir wieder am La-gertfeuer (wir saßen überhaup-jeden Abend am Lagerfeuer) und

sangen ihre Lieder. Ralle und Tuula, die auch die Pflichten-liche mitbrachten, waren dankbar für jedes Verschied mit Fußba-ten, aber dabei saßen wir auch, was alles schon vergessen und in der Veranlassung wiederzuholen ist. Schließlich hat uns doch ein schwebender Lehrer mit einem schonen Sachse. Ja, der Abends kam nicht schnell, zu-packer es zuerst. Sie waren ge-wohnt übermenschliches Her-zen nach ihrer besten Kinder, und wollte ebenfalls die große Begabung nicht mehr schen-ken. Sie hat noch schnell mit, zum Lagerfeuer zu kommen, und denn setzte sie die Mace. Ein paar Abwehrströme standen in in der Augenblicke.

Am Abend dann großer Ball mit Begabung. Eine bekam den Award im den-train geschickten Hirt und den großen Otto-Pokal. Es wurde Zweite, Edda Dritte, punktgleich mit Ralle. Es gab viel Silber und viel, viele Geschenke. Wir alle wollten uns in näch-ster Jahr in Finland wieder-treffen, dort können uns die Leute noch nicht. Und wieviel gibt es noch ein Jahr unternommen-lange Mädchen? Es mit uns denken fahren? Ellen Pfeiffer





EINLADUNG ZUM WIMA-TREFFEN / INVITATION TO THE WIMA RALLY
 IN PIHTIPUDAS,
 FIN(N)LAND
 22.-27.7.1973

PROGRAMM :
 PROGRAMME :

Donnerstag Thursday	22. Juli July	: ANKUNFT / ARRIVAL
Freitag Friday	23. Juli July	: TURNTAG / TOUR
Sonntag Sunday	25. Juli July	: RUND UM DEN KOLIMASEE / AROUND LAKE KOLIMA
Mittwoch Wednesday	26. Juli July	: BEERENPFLÜCKERFAHRT / BERRY PICKING TOUR
Donnerstag Thursday	27. Juli July	: WILDERNISFAHRT / WILDERNESS TOUR
Freitag Friday	28. Juli July	: SIEGCELEBRATION / PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY

JARON MANNEN GEFÜHRTE/GEFÜHRT/LEADER / EVERY MORNING RIDING SKILLS COMPETITION
 JARON AARU FÖRARE/LEADER / EVERY EVENING QUIZZES

Bitte, bis den 30. April, anfragen! Please write before April 30th!		PERSONENLISTE / NUMBER OF PERSONS:	
BEZIMMELTEN: TOIKA KIVILÄHTÖ PÄÄNNÄÄ	RAUTANPILÄT METSÄ PIHTIPUDAS PILKUNEN	IM WÄRDUNG VERBODEN / I WANT LEADERS:	PERSONEN PERSONS
PER PERSONENLISTEN GEBOREN TOUR SECRETARIES	Tuula Laila	NAME	PERSONS
		SEX	PERSONS
		HOME / COUNTRY	PERSONS
		DO YOU HAVE MOTORBIKE AND A LICENSE IN IT?	PERSONS

held the top places in the Pfadfinder Pokal (Boy Scout Cup) organised by Das Motorrad. In 1972 Raila won a zippy Zundapp 125: she promptly sold the machine and remained faithful to her Pannonia!

Tiia Riihiluoma from WIMA Finland relates that there were ten participants at this rally according to the Ladies Bike Club history book. (The rally was held here several years before a WIMA division was formed in Finland).

The rally programme shows that it was quite a busy week, with a riding skills competition every morning, quizzes in the evening and an activity planned every day:

- Monday – Tower tour
- Tuesday – Around Lake Kolima
- Wednesday – Berry picking tour
- Thursday – Wilderness tour
- Friday – Prize giving ceremony



1974 France, La Petite-Pierre, 22-26 July

The second international rally in France was held at a campsite located near the Imsthal pond, La Petite-Pierre, Vosges du Nord.

GB member Mary Stevens, wrote a report for WIMA News: The Rally was held at La Petite-Pierre, not far from Strasbourg. We had competitions: flower arranging, road trial, trial and technical. We also had a trip to Strasbourg to the Kronenbourg Beer factory, which the men thoroughly enjoyed. I was particularly struck by the friendliness of the other girls, and the helpfulness of husbands and boyfriends who would all help with the organising of events and cheered us all on in the Trial.

WIMA France member Chantal Hertrich (who was later WIMA France president for many years) described being welcomed by Agnès Acker, rally organiser and founder of WIMA France. Chantal reported that there were around 24 women participants from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Austria, England and France. They were also accompanied by a few men and children. She went on to describe the activities of the week.

The weather was not very good this week, but the programme was varied:

- a tourist rally on the pretty Alsatian roads with a visit to the Kronenbourg beer factory
- a game where you had to find a breakdown on a motorcycle
- a game where you had to guess motorcycle parts hidden in small bags
- a 400m standing start race on a small road
- a floral contest where you had to make a beautiful arrangement or bouquet
- the creation of a WIMA song



'They came from all over Europe... In Imsthal, it is the celebration of women-centaurs' *headlined an article for a local paper, written by Marie Brassart about the rally.*

The events planned also aimed to combine 'femininity and motorcycling sport'. For femininity, Agnès planned a floral contest, and the jury would be made up of available boyfriends and husbands. To occupy the latter, who would rather sunbathe near the pond, they were given the task of making small mechanical glitches on bikes for the breakdown game. All motorcycles put on a single line would receive the attentive care of these gentlemen. The first biker to find the mechanical glitch on her machine would win. The rewards: cups, and accessories kindly donated by Strasbourg merchants.



1975 Sweden, Omberg, 24-27 July

A Swedish newspaper reported that there were about 70 girls at the meeting. They stayed at the hostel in Stocklycke, Omberg. Participants were mainly from Europe such as Germany, France, Austria, England, Holland, and Luxembourg. Traffic issues that were current at the time were that they wanted to introduce compulsory helmets and separate driving licences for motorbikes. In Sweden, they fight against high motorbike insurance. There was an excursion to Gränna and Visingsö. A campfire, orientation and party were arranged.

In an article for *Das Motorrad*, Ellen Pfeiffer wrote: For me, every year it is a nice experience to meet so many girls riding motorcycles, to exchange experiences and to laugh. The motorcycle competition was not as much in the foreground as in previous years. Only one mini-rally 'Around the Omberg' was held under competitive conditions. The whole thing was declared as a 'poker rally'; there was a plan like an orientation ride, and at each checkpoint you had to draw a playing card. The roadway was in a desolate state, but the landscape was inspiring. The control points are often hidden in such a way that one only came to the coveted playing card after sweaty climbing or after a walk through mosquito-swarmed undergrowth. Margit completed this task with flying colours by drawing the nine three times. Agnès followed her in second place with three times two.

In the afternoon there was a pedestrian rally, like a scavenger hunt, with questions hanging from marked trees. These were general knowledge questions that could be answered by housewives, motorcycle mechanics, moviegoers and politicians alike. Here, too, Margit won by a nose and thus became the 'WIMA woman' of the year 1975. After some general board games, came the big award ceremony with prize distribution.



For the longest journey, Maryvonne got the big trophy - she had the journey from the French Alps, followed by Traudl from Vienna, then a whole delegation came from France, Germany and England.

It wasn't just about the motorcycles and riding though. Ellen wrote: No trip through Sweden would be complete without a 'Sillbord' (a buffet of pickled herring with different flavours). So it was on our programme, and we were very curious to find out what it was. 'Hopefully no curb stones,' said Traudl, who had just had a tooth fixed. It was a cozy party with boiled potatoes, herring and all sorts of ingredients and subsequent funny songs, folklore and gymnastics. The French singers stood out, bringing with them an almost inexhaustible supply of chansons and folk songs.





Some 'pernicious,' 'twisted' minds think that we could be part of the MLF (Women's lib movement), thinking that we want to demonstrate to ourselves and to others, feminine superiority and total independence from men, while we like to admire real men, ardent in life, as on the handlebars. 'The passion for motorcycles beyond space and time,' this could be our rallying cry.

This year, we were 30 girls at this rally. Four Swiss, seven French, 14 Germans, two Austrian, two English, one Swedish, most of them staying on the campsite near Lake Neuchâtel. Many were with husbands or partners, so the total was about 50. A colourful village of small, light tents, around the glittering



park of motorcycles. 11 Honda, (including six 250cc), six BMW, three Yamaha, two MZ, two Suzuki and even a Condor 750 side car.

The Swiss welcome was warm: a wine reception at Yverdon Town Hall, and a speech delivered with dignity by an official, brought together these ladies with big boots and nails full of sludge. We then visited a museum of lovely musical automatons and a cigarette factory in Vevey on Tuesday.

Regula described the Tuesday evening: We were all invited to a garden party at the organisers. On the Promenade des Pins, two mighty hams with fine farmer's bread and a lot of salad awaited us; there was no lack of liquid. A good 50 people, WIMA ladies and their husbands and friends, and a part of the Moto Club Bullet ate their fill, and still the ham was not finished. Bravo to the butcher who prepared and served it himself! On Wednesday we only met at 1 pm, because otherwise most would have slept too little.

Agnès continued: All the excursions were a great opportunity to compare our dexterity in the curves and turns, very numerous in Switzerland. Sports events including rifle shooting led to a ranking, with many prizes and gifts collected by Juliette. An archery session in Arrissoules, like that of the legendary William Tell, allowed the girls to test their skill, but none of the men present agreed to lend their heads for the test. Good thinking, because no arrow hit its target.

More suited to our skills, the trial event took place in the rain on the Bullet motorcross track. Florian Thévenaz lent us a Montesa 125 and a Yamaha trail 125. With little experience of these small motorcycles, we slid and stalled... and discovered the Swiss daisies at close range.

After a last test, a tourist rally crossing villages and countryside, it is our English friend Mary who was crowned MADAME WIMA 76; the silver medal went to the French brunette Maryvonne, and the bronze one to Traudl, our blonde Austrian friend.

1977 France, Méribel les Allues, 25-29 July



Regula Rüttimann (WIMA Switzerland) wrote: The rich programme already began with the journey itself. The road to Méribel leads from Moûtiers with many curves up to 1600m above sea level to the health resort. The event was held at hotel La Chaudanne.



Monday: Gymkhana and 'Petits mystères dans un sac'. The Gymkhana (skill riding) took place on very uneven terrain. It was nice, dry weather and we didn't think they could make this more difficult for us with water. The start went through a puddle and there they were, the dreaded wet tyres for the subsequent meadow! After the puddle, came a small slope to traverse (already on grass). With still wet tyres you had to ride over eight tyres, immediately take a sharp curve to the right and then balance over a 30cm high and equally narrow seesaw. After a sharp right turn,



we went over a narrow plank and then under a bar. At the end, a small slalom followed to the finish. Almost everybody rode with her own machine. As a precaution, I unscrewed the mirrors, as I wanted to spend my next holiday with the CB750 in Corsica.

When rain set in, we squeezed into the hotel for a guessing game. Maryvonne Rosso, the organiser, had sewn small parts of a motorcycle into small cloth bags that you had to 'feel' with your hands. Some clothes pegs and bottle openers were smuggled in as an additional complication. Everyone was allowed to write down their result in their own language; many could speak two to four languages, so that you could decipher everything.

With these and other activities, we spent the next few days. 'Chinesenrally' (orientation drive according to symbols), acceleration test. Here Ellen from Germany gave me good advice: My machine is the fastest in this category - next to the BMWs. But I would have to start well, something like this: rev the engine to 4000 rpm, pull in the clutch and bang the gear into first! Even the thought was painful, as the bike clunks into first gear anyway. I told her she should demonstrate this first with her machine. 'Nope, not with my new 1000 BMW, it's not used to it yet.' But she said mine should endure this! Since I was not used to the bike, (it was not mine at the time), I did not follow the 'good' advice.

In the evening, films from previous WIMAs were shown. (There was a roar and tears flowed like torrents into the valley).



A Rallye de Régularité (a Regularity rally – average speed trial) demanded a lot of stamina (at no price would I have given up my bed the evening after) and later followed the obligatory trial. It was raining cats and dogs, and some foreheads became wrinkled. But the meadow was soft enough for our 'landings' and the spectators had a lot of entertainment to watch. Apart from the motorcycle wheels, there were no injuries, only sore muscles from much laughing.

On Friday evening there was the announcement of the ranks and the distribution of prizes. And like every year, there were many prizes - even the last ranking woman got something along with a lot of applause. (The rally giveaway was an Opinel knife, a speciality of the area according to Chantal Hertrich.)

On Saturday came the tearful farewell.

1978 Wales, Bwlch, 24-29 July



The Continental rally was held at Llanfelte Farm in Wales at the instigation of the Germans and organised by Mary and Tim Stevens.

Regula Rüttimann, from WIMA Switzerland, wrote: After about 1200 km we reach Bwlch in Wales. Saturday in France: the weather is shining! Sunday in England:

pouring rain, but Mary Stevens welcomes us with coffee! In the evening the sun shines and we set up our fabric houses.

WIMA GB member Bea Hawkins remembered: The campsite was a farmer's field just off the A40 at Bwlch. One combined shower/toilet for everyone - rather different to what we expect these days. We incorporated the rally into our family holiday. Helen and Phillip were 10 and 8 respectively. However, we had two bikes there, my Ariel VH 500 and Ralph's BSA B33 500. The children were into riding pillion, so although I think we took the car and trailed one bike, we could join in with some of it on the bikes. We rented a cottage a few miles away.

GB member Sheila Whittingham related: The English WIMA women were not allowed to compete in the Trials. It was said by some because there wouldn't be enough prizes to go round. Despite this, GB member Jean Cox came 10th overall, taking part in every competition!

Mary Stevens reported on the rally activities for WIMA News. Monday sees the start of the competitions with the Gymkhana



held in the afternoon. The course must be laid out to provide a challenge for those on small machines as well as the big BMWs. Afterwards we have a Welsh tea. We have devised a card game to encourage everyone to communicate with each other and get to know one another. It seems to work and soon all the girls are chatting away merrily.

Tuesday, and with the sun shining we go into the forest for the hill climb. There are 30 participants, and they all enjoy blasting up the hill which consists of two hairpin bends joined together by a decent straight in which to wind the power on. In the evening after everyone had eaten, we go into the barn for the mystery bags competition.

Wednesday is a free day with no competitions, and those who wish, go off to explore this strange country called Wales. Again, the weather has been kind to those going for a ride, but there was some rain in the afternoon - that's Wales!

Thursday we are up early as it is the road trial today and everyone must start leaving at 10 o'clock sharp. I go straight to the Suttons' house with the van full of pasties and rolls for the picnic lunch at the end of the Trial. Everyone finds their way to the end of the road trial, even if some didn't arrive for lunch.

Friday dawned sunny and bright; the men went off to set up the trials course. The trial started later than we wanted and was only just over in time to have a quick wash and down to the Restaurant for dinner and the prize giving. The results list went to 55 places, and thanks to the generosity of motorcycle accessory firms and people like Kawasaki, Suzuki, Yamaha, Champion, Duckhams etc., we found a prize of sorts for everyone on the list. The overall winner and girl who gains the title 'Madam WIMA 1978' is Iris Bach of Germany.

Mary Stevens concluded her report: I was very pleasantly surprised at the turnout for this year's rally. In previous years the number of girls attending a Continental rally is something like 30. This year we had 77 girls attend and 55 entered at least one event. The countries represented were Germany, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and Great Britain.



1979 Czechoslovakia, Petrovice, 22-28 July



Chantal Hertrich, from WIMA France, wrote a report for this book: Czechoslovakia was a closed country within the Soviet bloc. Lida Abrahamova, Jawa motorcycle tester, who had participated in the Six Days, organised this rally in Petrovice where she lived, with the help of her husband, sons and friends.

It was not easy to bring in people from other countries, especially from the west. And the police came to the camp, and took our papers, so we could not move around as we wanted.



We went to Prague by bus as there were fears of motorcycle theft.

Despite the challenges, members from Austria (one), France (ten), Great Britain (three including Frances Popley), Switzerland (ten), East Germany (five) and West Germany (51) joined the two Czech members (Lida herself and Marie Zaluska). A total of 80 participants.

We were several from France, including Agnès Acker and her husband, another French woman, Agnès Walesa, who took care of WIMA after Agnès Acker, plus her husband. One French woman from Toulouse, Marie Christine, had ridden alone, with a brand new MZ 250 sidecar, from Toulouse. To ballast it, she had put a 50kg bag of cement!

A Parisian Yannick, and Mary Romeyer were there too. Mary participated in the WIMA rallies for many years. There were also Swiss women including Margrit Podesser (later Swiss captain) and Floh Petit was there too, along with many other Germans.

East Germans had come too, with old BMWs. They did not have good equipment to ride a motorbike, wore old boots... But they were there and could meet other people... from the west! And so were we. The discussions were interesting.

We had a gymkhana course which was not very easy, participated in a Fox Hunt (a tourist rally), went to visit Prague, and a castle... and maybe other things that I don't remember. There were lots of gifts for the participants. Jawa and CZ sponsored the occasion. And the awards ceremony was a great evening. I won a beautiful plaque, very contemporary, with Petrovice written on it.



1980 Switzerland, Bumbach, 28 July-1 August

The Continental rally took place in Bumbach, in the canton of Bern, about 25 kilometres from Thun. There were around 100 participants - German, English, French, Swedish, Austrian and Swiss. Most of the information below is from the programme.



Despite there being no Italian participants, the Italian magazine *Motociclismo* took an interest and speculated, 'why the woman-motorcycle combination still causes resistance and amazement, especially in men.'

The male reporter noted: 'most of the members of the association are keen to specify that they only ride because they love to ride, and not to demonstrate their emancipation from their male colleagues. It is also for this reason that they show a certain, quite understandable, aversion to the press which, in addition to considering them objects of curiosity, judges them to be male-female, viragos.'

There was a full programme of events.

- Monday: a gymkhana, and in the evening a film about previous WIMA rallies.
- Tuesday: Parade ride to a show dairy in Gruyères, featuring a local speciality dessert, meringues with cream. In the programme, the instructions for the parade ride were as follows: Ride in convoy, total length about 1 km! The cantonal police of Bern accompany us part of our way so that we can all ride in a convoy and are not torn apart at the intersections or traffic lights. Even the access to the motorway is regulated. Before we enter, the motorway is narrowed by one lane for other road users, so that we have a whole lane for ourselves. It is therefore very important that you stick to the schedule and follow the following rules:

At exactly 9 o'clock set up in front of the village: first the 125s, then the 250s, etc. Ride in a staggered convoy of two bikes. Overtaking is strictly forbidden. It is to be ridden slowly so that all those whose machines reach a maximum speed of 60 km/h can keep up. Keep enough distance. If something does not go well with rider or machine, just stop at the edge; a breakdown vehicle follows! Do not constantly look in the rearview mirror, but at the front vehicle so that you can stay in lane, so everything works out and you have an unforgettable experience. Refuelling is out of the question (Gruyères is only about 100 km away) and everyone rides back by themselves. Have fun!

- Wednesday: a rally of about 200 km where a timed task or question was posed at each stop, ending with dinner, after which everybody was invited onto the stage to contribute something to the entertainment (the first time what would become 'Trash Nights' was



mentioned).

- Thursday: an opportunity to relax. Swimming, lounging or ride in a convoy to visit to the cities of Thun and Bern.
- Friday: a trial test with the legendary Swiss champion Godi Linder, with real trial machines from Yamaha.

The closing of the event included, in addition to the award to the top winner, Cordula Ziegler from Munich, a special party for the anniversary of the birth of the Swiss Confederation (1st August). The programme said there would be a giant bonfire with all villagers and trial spectators, with wood collected by everybody and after midnight they would roast sausages on the fire. A dance band would play until 2 am.

1981 West Germany, Buseck-Oppenrod, 27 Jul-1 Aug



The Continental division rally in 1981 was organised by Elke Weiß (later Elke Maria Löhnerz). Chantal Hertrich from WIMA France shared her memories of the fun she had at the rally. With additional information here from Elke Maria herself.

We were two French Girls to go to this rally, organised by Elke Maria. Marie Ange, my sister and me, Chantal. We arrived after a rainy trip and planted our tent on the field. We didn't know many persons and were happy to meet some Italian girls. It was their first WIMA rally.

There was Maria on a 3 1/2 Morini, Lidiana, Loredana and Rita with her husband Eduardo. We spent a lot of time with them. They didn't speak German and it was hard for them to understand the programme and all the explanations. I tried to translate... Not always easy!

I think that Floh Petit and Margrit Podesser were there also. There was a woman who had a French Christian name of a man: Etienne! Her parents liked this name and thought that it was a girl's name. Like Fabienne, Adrienne, Emilienne, Julienne.



During this week, there was a touristic rally in the area, and we could ride with a go-kart and bicycles on a circuit. And we could take part in a Sicherheits training session from ADAC (learn to handle difficult situations in traffic with your bike – to always be safe).

We could learn how to ride better with our bikes. The instructor was a tall blond German man, very athletic. His name was Arthur. We learned many good things during this long day! Hot day, many women in shorts, crop tops, light clothes, some without bras... The man was very excited.

At the end of the day, we spoke together, between girls, and noticed that Arthur had invited some of us, separately, to go out with him for the evening!!! He invited one after the other.... Not one of us accepted.... Later, when we spoke of that, we laughed very much! Poor Arthur!

After this week, I came back home with Marie Ange, very happy and hoping that we could go to Scotland, in Fort William, for the next rally in 1982.

Elke Maria added: two other activities were a Stelzenlauf (stilt walk) and a Gymkhana which she did on her 175 ER Kawasaki.

1982 Scotland, Fort William, 25-30 July

Ali Cameron and Ann Weir from WIMA GB shared their memories of the rally: The rally was organised by Mary and Tim Stevens. Fort William has some high mountain roads around it. During the reconnaissance stage, Ali had ridden in such cold weather that she developed hypothermia on her bike and had to spend a night in hospital! However, the rally in July had stunning weather and was very enjoyable.

Ann Weir rode in on her Jawa combo with her labrador dog Deno, as ballast in the sidecar. A rider from Eastern Europe arrived – either Czech or Hungarian who was also a national canoeing champion. She could only stay for three days because she was only given permission to be out of the country for a week. If she didn't get back in time, members of her family would be arrested - clearly Iron Curtain days.

The rally started with a welcome lunch of traditional food including haggis and neeps, and shortbread at the Highland Hotel. A busy affair with a male singer of traditional Highland Scottish ditties and naturally he was wearing a kilt. The German girls thought it was a great sport to attempt to take 'upskirted' (as we now call it) photos and these were deftly avoided by said chanteur kneeling as soon as he saw a hand wielding a camera coming towards him.

Tuesday included a fun gymkhana with tyre changing, caber tossing and silly games. Wednesday, they headed off to the Highland Games to see the real caber tossing and more bagpipes and kilts. The ride out headed to Mallaig on beautiful roads, the views now famous through Hogwarts Express train ride. The weather was very warm, and the Germans showed us all how to keep cool by wearing their bikinis under their leathers, stripping off at the check points along the rally route. The off-road trials at Kinlochleven were on the final day – Ali's bike went off-course down a steep valley, where her leg hit a tree, she ended up back in hospital again – with a cracked tibia.

In the evenings they had a barbeque, games, film shows and campfires. Prize giving on the final evening was at a local hotel, where the top winner, Jutta Hieronymus, was presented with a pair of deer antlers as a prize! She headed home to Germany with them strapped onto her top box.



1983 The Netherlands, Spaarnwoude, 25-30 July



This fifth Continental rally in the Netherlands was hosted on the Welgelegen campsite, an enclosed ground surrounded by ditches, near Haarlem. The first WIMA Continental rally was held in the Netherlands in 1958 at which there were 9 participants from

four countries. In 1983, numbers had increased to 144 women, 27 men and 4 children from eight countries. The entry fee of about £25 included all events such as the special meals and visits, as well as the camping.



A Dutch newspaper reported on the rally: On campsite Welgelegen, you see a gathering of all sorts of tents. Small one-person shelters, family and group tents. The motorbikes, bright and shining and varying from 250cc to 1000cc.

Besides 43 Dutch members and their families, WIMA members from Switzerland, France, Italy, Sweden, Austria, West Germany and England are present on this yearly summer camp.

The Dutch WIMA branch, founded in 1981, consists of a small group of female bikers.

Peggy van Schaik describes WIMA as the only place a female biker fanatic is taken seriously.

Peggy rides a 1000cc Honda Goldwing with sidecar; her little son is the sidecar passenger. Most women who chose to ride a sidecar bring along children and spouses to participate in this event.



Marion Watt's report was published in the English Motorcycle Weekly: Rallyists began arriving at the campsite at Spaarnwoude near IJmuiden from Saturday afternoon, ready for the start on Monday, when a ride to Akersloot and a welcome lunch was planned. As it was very hot (it turned out to be the best day weatherwise), we went to the coast for a swim in the afternoon and a barbecue was held in the evening.

Tuesday started with the first competition: the bicycle gymkhana. Vanessa Bretton upheld the honour of the British, scoring 130 out of a possible 150, but the most entertaining rounds were by Anne Gale and a petite French girl called Chantal who treated us to some marvellous sound effects. In the afternoon, we visited a cheese factory and a windmill, amid violent thunderstorms!

On Wednesday, we were supplied with a detailed route card for a 125 km tour along the IJsselmeer coast. We used minor roads as far as possible, including a beautiful stretch alongside a picturesque canal, and later crossing on a ferry to take us to the fishing village of Spakenburg.

On Thursday morning, coaches took participants into Amsterdam, about 25 miles away. There was free time in the morning for shopping and sightseeing, and in the afternoon a visit to the Heineken factory, followed by a canal boat trip.

Friday was an even earlier start, as we could collect our route map and question sheet for the treasure hunt from 8.30 am, and then we made our way to Alkmaar where the hunt started. Completed questionnaires had to be returned before 3.30 pm, to allow time for marking before the evening farewell dinner and prize giving at Restaurant Akersloot.

Thank-you gifts were given to Peggy and Cees Van Schaik in recognition of the immense amount of work they had done. Gifts were also given to some of the German girls, as Ellen Pfeiffer has now attended 25 Continental rallies, Jo Johnen 20, and two others 10.

Competition Winners:

- Overall: 1st Carola Cach; 2nd Marion Sommer; 3rd Christina Bork.
- Gymkhana: 1st, Veronika Wartia; 2nd, Carola Cach; 3rd, Cordula Gewecke.
- Tour/photos: 1st, Liesbeth Stahel; 2nd, Margrit Podesser; 3rd, Christine Arndt.
- Treasure hunt: 1st, Christine Wedhorn; 2nd, Bettina Kuberka; 3rd, Birgit Auschner.



1984 Switzerland, Morbio-Superiore, 23-27 July



This report has combined information from Lisbeth Stahel in Switzerland and Kate Campbell who had travelled 2500 km from Scotland.

More than 122 women from Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, Holland, England and

Italy participated. Italy was supposed to be the venue this year, but the Italians were unable to host it, so Switzerland stepped in and chose Ticino (also known as Ticino), on the border with Italy. The local police were very helpful and tolerant towards this 'Raduno di donne motocicliste' (gathering of motorcycling women).

The women, together with children and partners started arriving on the Friday, setting up their tents around the school building. The village fête in Sarno provided a Ticino BBQ and there was a lot of fun, laughter and dancing on the street till late. Sunday, back to the fête - the host provided minestrone con tripa, meat salad and formaggi. Monday started with an easy day to relax or to explore the local area and swim in the lakes.

A few needed to get repairs done on their bikes; there was such a warm welcome locally that some even received free repairs accompanied by coffee and a chat. The official welcome dinner was in Grotto. Osso buco with polenta was served, along with local drinks. In a relaxed and merry atmosphere, old and new friends met up - a promising start to the coming week.

Tuesday was a rally around Lake Maggiore; there was some excitement, when they realised they were crossing the border into Italy along the way, and many didn't have their passports with them. The route followed twisty roads towards Lake Maggiore via Sesto Calende. Tasks at the various checkpoints included identifying motorbikes from their recorded sounds, answering questions, drawing their own bikes, while some even had a quick dip in the lake en route. Wednesday was a free



day to relax and explore the area.

Thursday was a ride over Monte Generoso with questions to be answered along the way. Rain and hail had made the route very challenging; there were a few crashes but nothing major. The final ascent was even steeper, with helpers positioned on the worst stretches, but everyone succeeded and arrived at the top, laughing, sweating, and pleased with having made it. Ellen, 'WIMA mother' of the German riders, sped up the hills very fast on her 1000cc BMW and commented drily 'Why, that wasn't so special, was it?'. Coffee was at Grotto Eremo with its little chapel San Nicolao, and the route continued via Rovio and Campione, finishing at the Swiss Miniature Museum.

The villagers of Caneggio, having heard about the rally, insisted on bringing forward the start of their festival by a day just for WIMA. Once more everyone sat together under a starry sky enjoying good food and music as they laughed, sang and talked.

The competitions ended with a skill parkour. Two 125cc bikes were provided to tackle the course, dodging around trees and across a dry riverbed. Unfamiliar bikes meant there was a lot of laughter though, with loud encouragement from the spectators, everybody made it.

The final evening, together with a farewell feast, was held at the Hotel Stazione in Mendrisio, where Agnes Kamhuber was declared the overall winner. Generous and numerous sponsors meant a huge array of prizes and gifts from perfume to chain oil, Swatch watch, camera, gloves, boots, helmet, rain gear and a leather jacket. Everyone went home happy.

1985 Sweden, Gålö, 29 July-3 August

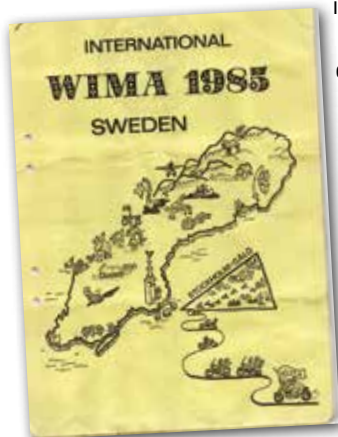


This report on the Swedish rally on Gålö peninsular, south of Stockholm is based on a report from Anita Paulsson and Åsa Öhqvist from WIMA Sweden, a report from a German newspaper and additional information from Sheonagh Ravensdale from WIMA GB.

About 75 women from six countries – Sweden, Switzerland, Germany, France, UK and Netherlands participated.

The welcome pack contained maps and info leaflets, ginger biscuits, perfume, a dala-horse, rally food coupons and a wooden brick for your side-stand.

The campsite was wonderful, beside a lake fringed with fir trees, though the toilet was rustic and the only source of water (which was fresh and icy cold) came from a hand pump. The campsite was half a mile down a steep, loose gravel track which made for interesting navigation riding the bikes in and out each day. The Swedes, led by Berry Keller, their president, offered a varied programme of activities including a slow race and rides that showed off the best of their beautiful country with great success. It was a bit rainy at times but offset by lovely sunshine in between.



Monday: A Walking Quiz answering questions about Sweden and in the evening sampling Swedish specialities, renklämma - flatbread with smoked reindeer and lingonberry juice to drink. Every evening, the group gathered around a campfire singing in different languages watching the spectacular sunset over the lake - lasting until 11 pm.

Tuesday: Visit to Stockholm, travelling on a bus where the women had the opportunity to explore and



visit the sights. In the afternoon they went to see the famous warship Vasa, which sank 300 years ago on its maiden voyage and was raised in 1961. Next on the programme was a visit to the theme park Gröna Lund with its thrilling rides. In the evening, the group Kicks played, and their performance was highly appreciated by the foreign members who danced on the tables until they were told off by the security guards! It was almost midnight when the bus took them back to the campsite.

Wednesday was the day of the rally ride, approximately 120 km predominantly on small B roads through pleasant countryside. On the way they had to do an obstacle course and had to find letters which would spell out a Swedish word, the coastal town of Nynäshamn, where a picnic lunch was provided for all.

Thursday: Castle Drottningholm, the home of Sweden's monarch was the destination for a ride out accompanied by the police and a TV crew who filmed them.

Friday was an excursion by ferry to Åland island. During the crossing they had the opportunity to eat, sunbathe, enjoy the pool and sauna or spend time in the bar and on the dance floor. Åland is a group of islands under Finnish sovereignty though the people speak Swedish. It was hot and sunny, and making the most of the beautiful weather, they explored the island, visited the waterfront of Mariehamn and admired the 'Pommern' a four-masted ship. On the return ferry they enjoyed an excellent smörgåsbord and the rally finale, prize giving, speeches and the video of their splendid procession through Stockholm on the bikes. This year's WIMA Woman was Margith Hostehler from Switzerland. Rita Liesenfeld from Germany was the runner up and Anita Korevaar from The Netherlands came third.

The only two participants from WIMA GB, Sheonagh and Janet, wondered if they could have an award for their journey of 3580 km in mostly inclement weather on two-stroke bikes, a Suzuki T500 and Yamaha RD400.



1986 West Germany, Vogelsberg, 28 July-1 August



This rally was organised by Elke Maria Löhnerz and Ulrike from Marburg, helped by women from the Hexenring.

Elke Maria told us that a treasure hunt was organised across the low mountain range with marshals and visits. The final dinner took place in Betzenrod. Apart from Germans, there were also Swiss women at the rally. Elke added that they used the Falltorhaus, a meeting place for motorcyclists with a campground and dormitory near Schotten im Vogelsberg. She said that back then there were not that many women at a WIMA rally.

Ulrike Buschmann was the overall winner, but despite extensive research, we've been unable to find any more information about this rally. However, Elke was presented with a Certificate with an inscription which translates as:

'Elke did a great job setting up the tent and then held out till the end of WIMA '86 at Vogelsberg. For this she is presented this certificate with a picture. The WIMA organisation Germany'



1987 England, Ashbourne, 27-31 July



Anne Gale, Ann Weir, Widge Thorpe and Sheonagh Ravensdale, all of WIMA GB, each contributed memories to this rally report.

160 women riders came and enjoyed the lovely Derbyshire countryside – with the mixture of British weather that makes the summer! Ann Weir recalls ducks roaming around on the campsite, looking for food amongst the tents. Sheonagh remembered some torrential rain, drowning several tents including hers. She suggested to Jennifer Killen that she should organise a rally in Australia where the weather might be better. Jennifer suggested the year 2000 which was so far in the future none of us could imagine such a thing...





Anne Gale was the organiser, produced a programme in four languages, and wrote this report: WIMA GB had held many of its previous national rallies at Callow Top Farm at Ashbourne in Derbyshire, so this venue seemed a good place to hold the 1987 international rally. The rally was to be camping, but for anyone who didn't wish to camp, there was a variety of accommodation close by.

Monday's activity was a Gymkhana motorbike competition hosted on-site followed by a welcome supper in the barn during the evening. This ended up being a late night during which much food and alcohol was consumed.

Tuesday saw everyone riding over the hills to The National Tramway Museum at Crich followed by a traditional cream tea at The Coach House, near Matlock. The evening competition was to read some text and find the motorbike manufacturers hidden in the words.

Wednesday was the treasure hunt, including several controls along the way which competitors had to sign in at, and the route took in wonderful views of the Peak District. A packed lunch was supplied to everyone.

Thursday was a Skills Riding Test held on-site for which a bike was provided. And, during the evening, a silly competition for who could get the most items into a match box. This caused a lot of merriment.

Friday was a free day to relax and explore at participants' leisure. Some of the girls chose to go to the Blue John Mines where the beautiful Blue John gem is mined – the only place in the world it is to be found.

The evening meal, with the awards and general celebration, was held at The Peeveril of the Peak where a wonderful time was had by all, and Gisela Arndt was declared the overall winner.

Saturday was 'farewell until next year'. What a wonderful week where members from all over had a great time meeting all week to the joy of all of those who helped put on this event.

1988 Hungary, Dunaharaszti, 25-29 July



This report was compiled using a report by Liesbeth Stahel for Moto Sport Schweiz, and Ann Weir's report for WIMA GB News.

Hungary at that point had no WIMA, but 'Mother Ellen' from Frankfurt, WIMA's 'Grand Old Lady', was able to persuade her long-time

Hungarian friend Tibor and his wife Hanni to organise the rally and give members an opportunity to visit and ride in this beautiful country. WIMA members arrived from Switzerland, West Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Great Britain, East Germany and even two riders from Australia. Eastern Europe was still quite separate from Western Europe and many of the riders had to get a visa to visit Hungary, whilst the two riders from East Germany had to follow a prescribed route to get there.

In Hungary, motorcycling was still regarded as a man's business, and in fact, not many women were even seen driving cars – so the WIMA riders got a lot of attention, especially those on the larger model bikes and the 'flashy' Japanese bikes.

They had lovely weather throughout the week, starting with Monday as everyone arrived, put their tents up and found the campsite bar. The evening was spent renewing old friendships and making new ones, with some of the Swedish and German contingents talking and laughing all through the night.

Tuesday was a chance to visit Budapest, just 25 km away, travelling on the local and unbelievably cheap trains and trams. Budapest is a stunning medieval city with some incredible architecture and of course many also went for a boat trip on the Danube, finished off nicely with a swim in a local spa pool.

Wednesday was the chance to explore on bikes. Tibor the host, led the way but he dropped his bike, broke some ribs and sadly spent the rest of the week in hospital. This didn't stop the WIMA riders who continued without him, and all had an enjoyable ride ending at a tiny mountain village. It's a unique place, preserved with medieval charm. Bikes had to be parked





1989 The Netherlands, Eiland van Maurik, 24-28 July



MAURIK
NEDERLAND
24-28 JULI 1989



In 1989 the rally was located at a holiday park on the Island of Maurik, in the heart of the Betuwe region. We don't have any information on how many participated and where they were from. But we do have a copy of the programme, a rally report from Lesley Dibley that was published in WIMA GB News and some memories by Widge Thorpe.

After registration on the Sunday afternoon, Monday was a free day, and there was a barbecue in the evening. Lesley wrote: the barbecue that evening was excellent - plenty of meat, delicious peanut sauce, a lovely salad and plenty of beer. Most people got up and boogied at the disco.

*On Tuesday's treasure hunt and photo quiz, Lesley reported: the route was given in 100 instructions, and at certain ones specified by a ' * ' we had to be extra vigilant and observant to our surroundings until the next instruction. We got home at 7 pm Just a short trip, a mere 240 km! Armed with Cally's prolific notes and drawings, we headed for the barn, to find a handful of very obscure photos, which we were supposed to identify and place in the correct order of where we had seen them during the route.*



at the top of the hill and riders walked down the rambling stone road. It is still very much inhabited, and people live more or less the same as they did a century or two ago. As the German girls prepared to leave, stripping off their trousers to don leathers etc., where their bikes were parked, one local after another stood up to get a better view till their eyes were out like organ stops! The evening was spent socialising at the campsite, drinking the café dry of beer and wine – at a cost of just £1 for a bottle of wine, it's not surprising!

Thursday included a trip to the famous Pusztá horse stables, riding to the entrance then being transported by horse and buggy and even an ox cart, as the ground left something to be desired (six inches of sand). They were entertained by an incredible display of equestrian talent, followed by the opportunity to ride some of the horses in a paddock, plus a very tame donkey.

Participants enjoyed a celebratory meal of typical Hungarian cuisine including the famous gulaschsuppe (Goulash), followed by grilled meats, potatoes and salads. Throughout the meal a quartet entertained and of course everyone joined in humming and singing when a familiar tune was played. It was the end of the week and time to start the long rides home – the third rally taking place behind the Iron Curtain, with no local WIMA group and what a success it was!





The programme for the Wednesday offered a chance to display your prowess on two wheels, in a three-part gymkhana. Widge Thorpe recalled: the sports day obstacle course had to be done in clogs. Lesley said: the gymkhana was planned for today and looked diabolical. In three parts, involving a huge pair of clogs, a very small pedal bike, and an extremely temperamental trials bike, it looked interesting enough to throw up a fair challenge. The trials bike eventually gave up the ghost, so we all retired to sun ourselves.

A visit had been arranged to the Open-Air Museum at Arnhem today (Thursday). It's a beautiful site, full of old dwellings, windmills and farmhouses from Dutch history, collected from all over Holland and rebuilt into their own surroundings.

Friday was another free day, followed by the farewell dinner. We don't know who won the prizes, only who didn't, thanks to Lesley's report: dinner was very nice, though the restaurant was very hot. Typically, us Brits didn't win anything... we like to keep with tradition you know. Each of us got a tile with the Netherlands WIMA logo on.



1990 France, Saint-Pierre, 30 July-3 August



The rally was held in the beautiful Alsace region of France and was organised by WIMA France captain, Chantal Hertrich.

Here, in her own inimitable words, is her description of the rally: In 1990, we did not have many members in France; we were only three or four girls participating in the international rallies. And at each rally, I was asked when France would organise an international rally... With my sister Marie-Ange and Véronique Ischia, we had talked about organising a rally in France one day, but without believing in it, because WIMA France was not organised in a club or group. No one paid a subscription apart from me, who contributed to WIMA Germany, to stay in touch with WIMA and I informed the others, French and Italian.



It's hard to imagine a one-week rally with hundreds of people to manage, where you needed money, organisation but no members to help... Mission impossible! We were part of two motorcycle clubs and spoke to the presidents of these clubs. They decided to help us. And WIMA France, which did not have enough members and no committee, was hosted by the Amicale du Moto club de Barr, WIMA France section.

So, we came into existence, opened a bank account and decided to organise the 1990 rally, in a small village near my home for more convenience. We already had ideas of what we could do, but no computer; everything was done in letters by post, no cell phones. A lot of letters with questions arrived - it was necessary to answer. It took time. It was necessary to do everything... Colossal work! And my business to run! We asked for help everywhere, from my clients, suppliers, friends, family... And we did a cheap rally, with two restaurants and with a free t-shirt: not even 500F (about 72 euros at the time).

And at the end of July 1990, in the middle of a heatwave, we were able to welcome WIMA members from 11 countries in Saint-Pierre in Alsace. And we were only three WIMA France members. Some French women had become members after an article in a newspaper, but they did not come except a 69-year-old member!

There were 180 members from nine different countries, some with their families. Friends from East Germany whom



we'd met in Hungary were there, including Tibor and Panni his wife, who had organised the 1988 international rally in Dunaharaszti. There were a lot of side cars and a lot of children. It was joyful!

On the first evening, the mayor of the village offered us a welcome drink at the campsite where the camp was located (plus a large field). It was very hot and no trees to provide shade. A bit difficult to bear. But a lake about 10 km away was very appreciated.

We organised a tourist rally on the wine route, with different physical tests on the route, and a series of questions on arrival at the campsite. We also organised a manoeuvrability test with a velo-chopper. We had to put on a skirt, hat, washing-up gloves very quickly and do a sporting course; it was fun! And with these events, we could do a ranking for the prizes. On Thursday evening, we had organised a barbecue at the campsite and were lucky that the Kronenbourg brewery offered us beer all evening. Another day, a visit to the Council of Europe was organised and a large parade of motorcycles crossed Strasbourg at noon, escorted by Police Motorcyclists. Grandiose! The meal took place at the Restaurant de l'Ancienne Douane, emblematic of Strasbourg. Typical Alsatian cuisine.

And on Friday evening, the prize giving and the farewell dinner took place at the Restaurant Kirmann in Epfig, in a pretty Alsatian setting where a typical meal was served. And good Alsatian wine flowed freely! We had a lot of freebies for everyone, and the sponsors were generous. The beautiful and cheerful distribution of the prizes ended this eventful week, but everything was successful, and this rally was the last one organised in France (until 2023), apart from the small 3-Länder Treffen. This week had happily gone well.

Chantal then added: A Dutch member was hospitalised for an attack of appendicitis. A girl who helped us, met her future husband. And it was the first rally of Doris Porter (later second international vice president) and Rita Koopmanshaap (later international president). It was very heavy work and a lot of stress. But we did it! Thanks to everyone who helped us.



1991 Switzerland, Steinen, 22-26 July



This report was written by a male journalist, Klaus Fischer for Moto Sport Schweiz, an article very much of its time with its assumptions about women motorcyclists. We've concentrated on reproducing the facts.

The event was attended by about 180 women and 15 children from Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Finland who had their own beautiful private camping area at the 'Buchenhof' campsite on Lake Lauerz.



Klaus Fischer attempted to explain the origins and spirit of WIMA and understand why women bikers stick together. The two main organisers of this meeting, Margrit Podesser and Betty Manz explained, 'Most of us are very positive about men; many have husbands or friends, but it is the case that they ride motorcycles in a way that is often to do with speed, competition, stress. We, on the other hand, also love our machines, but our conversations often cover much more than bikes and turn to everyday issues, whereas male biker clubs are practically always about Töff, Töff, Töff... That's why we always include so many games at our WIMA meetings, not all of which have to do with Töff (bike)'

Family friendliness is therefore the trump card and the cultivation of a decidedly 'classless' society. At WIMA, every woman is equally accepted, whether she rolls up on a Vespa or Harley-Davidson. Several sidecar teams can also be found,



1992 Germany, Berlin, 27-31 July



'Such huge changes have happened here, which we wanted to show to the other WIMAs. For this year, no place seemed more suitable to us than this city,' the eleven Berlin organisers explained in their invitation.

The venue was House Sunland, a leisure home providing rooms and camping space on an island on the River Spree.

Despite reservations by others about a city-based rally, roughly 170 participants gathered from Germany (100+), England (18), Switzerland (12), Netherlands (12), Sweden (7) and one each from France, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Austria and even USA.



which is particularly practical for mothers with children.

In any case, I can confirm that the women I met at this WIMA meeting here were not only from all sorts of countries, but from different walks of life and age groups.

The first half of the week must have been wonderful. Very hot, but very suitable for the events programme, such as the 'Quintathlon' with swimming and pedalo stages. Also, nighttime parties, as WIMA women love them, are better in warm weather. The traditional 'Rally' was underway, which requires not only motorcycling but also various challenges (even a real crossbow apple shoot), when, having looked so settled in the morning, the weather then turned. The planned trial (with Yamahas especially provided by importer Hostettler) had to be postponed to Friday because the steep terrain had become too greasy and dangerous in the rain. But the women were not discouraged, and a free day was announced, which many of them took advantage of with a trip on foot or by train.

The number of private individuals and companies that expressed their support to the WIMA meeting with donations in kind and money is almost unbelievable. In any case, the women received a whole lot of attractive prizes for the competitions and Silke Stolley was crowned Madame WIMA. (65 companies and individuals who sponsored the rally are listed in the programme!) A complete list of all sponsor companies would far exceed the scope of this report, but one worthy mention is for the butcher Reichmuth in Schwyz, who spontaneously offered the 180-strong women's group a veritable Zvieri afternoon snack when they rolled over the finish line after the Wednesday rally.



Annette Johann from WIMA Germany wrote about the rally for *Das Motorrad*. Partially reproduced here.

Petrol & Cromwell Helmets

Once a year they do it. For decades and always in the last week of July. WIMA women from all over Europe come together and celebrate their rally.

The woman in her mid-thirties looks attentively into the rear-view mirror of her 1100cc Suzuki. Concentrating, she follows the line of her lips, while she follows the discussion of the other

motorcyclists, 'Ride to Werder and bring a specialty from there,' co-pilot Gina quotes the rally questionnaire for the third time under a mountain of Brandenburg maps, thoughtfully looking around the marketplace of the small town. A passer-by, who curiously watches the lady with the theatre prop helmet doing her make-up, gives a clue: fruit wine. Christa puts away the lipstick and makes for the next supermarket. At last, a practical rally question.

Even on the festive last evening, WIMA remains what it is. A meeting where the Olympic idea of being there counts, the programme is pleasant variety, the skill competition exciting pleasure, the rally a laugh a minute and the rewards beautiful memories.

'For me, WIMA is the guarantee that I can get off for a week and enjoy myself without limits,' says Floh Petit, summing up her 19 years of WIMA.

Shortly after the announcement of tenth place, the whole competition scenario retreats into the background. You bury yourself in the telling of old and new stories, plans are made, appointments are made. For skiing in Meribel, for a short trip to New York, for a joint seasonal trip to Alsace. Because WIMA is not just once a year. For many, it is on their calendars all year round.

The rally had a full programme of events:

- Monday – Gymkhana and evening welcome dinner.
- Tuesday – Treasure hunt through the outskirts of Berlin.
- Wednesday – Quiz and motorcycle sidecar riding. A choice of small group tours to: Sanssouci Castle, Potsdam, the concentration camp memorial at Sachsenhausen, the Museum of Transport and Technology, and Marlene Dietrich's grave. In the evening, around three dozen night owls went on a late-night parade into the city and to the bars of Charlottenburg. 'While they rock until dawn with cool hip-hop rhythms, the rest enjoy themselves in the pub on the campground.'
- Thursday – Berlin sightseeing tour by bus and a disco and night show in the evening.
- Friday – a lie in and free day. Evening canal boat trip, farewell dinner and award ceremony. Ulrike Buschmann came first in the competitions and won the WIMA Woman of the Year award.



1993 Austria, Obervellach, 26-31 July



Conny Kiser from WIMA Switzerland told the story to Moto Sport Schweiz.

Women's Week

Around 160 women from eight European countries and one Japanese woman (a journalist for Lady's Bike Magazine in Japan) met for this year's international WIMA meeting in Kärnten.



Rainy Sunday - on arrival at the campsite, I pitched my tent and looked around. To my left and right was Bavaria, opposite Holland, Berlin and England were in the middle, Hamburg and the Czech Republic on the far left, Stuttgart and Bielefeld on the far right, near Switzerland. My kind of geography!

Mystery Monday - rain! We set off with a sheet of questions to find answers to on our route. The visit to Europe's first baby-village was quite funny, with a hotel designed for babies and all the paraphernalia. The destination was the Almhütte where we had to piece together a puzzle in the best possible time, and then we were served Bretteljause, a dish a bit like Rösti.



1994 Wales, Usk, 24-30 July



The venue for the 1994 rally was the Usk Agricultural College, which provided camping grounds, dormitory rooms and a bar.

Doris Porter wrote the following article for WIMA News:

260 WIMAs have fun in Gwent
Members booked in from countries all over the world including Australia, Japan, Netherlands,

France, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Germany and, of course, all corners of Britain. The Swedish contingent's arrival became doubtful at the last minute as the ferry they were due to catch had crashed in the harbour and their sailing was cancelled. Undeterred, Annette Ogren and Eva Lundquist made it to Usk after a four-day ride through five countries and arrived in style; local policemen had spotted them in town at 11.30 pm looking slightly lost and gave them an escort to the site!



Various planned and impromptu events during the week included competitions to find the top member or 'Madame WIMA' for the coming year, visits by the Pontnewydd Male Choir, a local blues and soul band, Rita (Sweden) who taught some belly dancing and impromptu circle dancing, and general campsite music and revelry.

On Monday, the first full day of the rally, around 190 people

In the evening, to officially open WIMA week, there was a traditional folk band and speeches by local VIPs.

Racy Tuesday - on Tuesday in beautiful weather, we rode through the Malta Valley on the panoramic road up to the reservoir. At the toll booth, waiting for the traffic light on the one-way stretch, there was something of a racing atmosphere. 19 minutes, cigarette lit, 10, take a photo, 5, slow stroll to the motorcycle, 2, helmet and gloves on, 1, start, full throttle, yeah! And then suddenly into the unlit tunnels. It was pitch dark in there - I almost got lost. That evening there was a campfire until the small hours.

Sporty Wednesday - on offer was small calibre shooting, asphalt stick shooting (a bit like curling without running after the stone), mountain biking and rafting.

Oily Thursday - a 200 km trip to Stockenboi and Weissensee was on the programme, but as my engine was losing oil, I stayed behind to fix it. The moment I got a spanner out, helpful WIMA women came to my aid with advice and action. We couldn't completely plug the leak, but the fact that there were so many women here who were unafraid of mechanics maybe inspired my machine to hang on to its oily lifeblood. Meanwhile, my Töff (bike) has learnt to read, as I always put newspaper underneath for protection.

Tricky Friday - today was a time trial obstacle course on your own bike which looked easier than it really was. I had to admire the Goldwing riders who rode the course without any major problems. Respect, ladies!

In the evening was the prize giving of around 70 awards and closing dinner. Martine Fricke from Berlin received the huge Madame WIMA trophy to thunderous applause. Moni-Lena Trüstedt was awarded the 'unlucky bird' trophy for falling and breaking her arm at the start of the week. There was even a male recipient, nine-year-old Jan from the north, who has become a kind of WIMA mascot.

Back at camp, there was the last campfire. Under the starry sky we sang our songs, told stories and we all really didn't want to go home. WIMA fever takes hold and once you're infected, nurture the virus and pass it on to nice women.

So then to next year in South Wales! Servus, see you, ciao and tschüss.



1995 Sweden, Morokulien, 24-28 July



Anita Paulsson and Åsa Öhqvist from WIMA Sweden wrote the report for this rally: Morokulien is a no-man's land between Sweden and Norway, north of Arvika in the region of Värmland. 207 foreign guests had signed up and a further 20 came as a surprise.

The price of this rally was set to 1100sek for camping and 1300sek for cabin. Accompanying kids paid 300sek (according to the historical currency converter this was approximately 110, 130 and 30 Euros respectively). There were only 10 cabins, and they were reserved for disabled guests or travellers from far away. Some meals were included in the price as well as a welcome kit that included shoeshine, pens, nubbeglas (a small glass for drinking hard liqueur), brochures about the area and Allemansrätten (Freedom to roam).

The weather was cold in the beginning of the week, rain and only 3°C but fortunately it dried up and got warmer later. The top temperature was 30°!

Unfortunately, there were some mishaps before the rally

took part in a 'Sports Day' competition, riding a bicycle through an obstacle course.

Tuesday's treasure hunt took rallyists through (at least!) 90 miles of the beautiful Gwent countryside between the castles of Raglan, Skenfrith, Chepstow, Caldicot and Penhow. Unlike the rest of the week, the weather conditions were appalling but more than 80 stalwart riders ignored the temptations of the cafes and pubs along the way to make it to the finish. Points were earned at the venues for leek launching (a leaky kettle replaced real vegetables), blind beanbag target throwing and a walking quiz. For the evening there was an indoor barbeque.

On Wednesday, the morning Skills Test involved participants riding their own motorcycle, over, under and through a tricky series of obstacles. Machines involved ranged from a Honda 125 trailie to a fully dressed Goldwing and several outfits. Many of the continental bikes were of the Transalp type and were skilfully ridden to success.

There was an afternoon run to the Big Pit Mining Museum where, having toured the underground workings, the visitors had a 'Miners Snap' (traditional miner's tea) complete with cheese, gibbons (spring onions) and Welsh Cakes (small, round, flat, biscuit-like cookies, cooked on a flat griddle with currants, doused with caster sugar). Back on site in the evening there was a disco.

St Fagans, the Welsh National Folk Museum in Cardiff, took a whole day on Thursday to see. Riders' biggest problem here was where and how to stash the still soft clay pots they had thrown on the potter's wheel, but most pots and riders made it back to the site intact. Awards were given out at the farewell supper in a nearby hotel. Andrea Beuchlen won WIMA Woman of the Year. A special Trials and Tribulations Award was given to Jutta Dittern, who had had to dash home to Berlin because of a crisis, only to find that it had passed and promptly set off again, returning exhausted on Tuesday morning. That's dedication! Thanks to the success of the organising committee to persuade manufacturers and other companies to give generously, there were enough prizes for everyone down to 70th place.





1996 Japan tour, formation of WIMA Japan, 31 March-9 April



Sheonagh Ravensdale wrote the report: We decided to include this event in the rallies section as it was an important occasion for WIMA International, that brought WIMA members from Europe and the USA to meet and ride together with a group of Japanese riders in their own home country, for the first time. Yuko Sugeta, Japanese test rider, international bike journalist and

editor of *Lady's Bike Magazine* in Japan, had attended the WIMA rally in Wales in 1994, and had brought a group of Japanese riders with her to the Swedish rally in 1995. I was running my own travel company at the time in London, and had the relevant licences and experience, and Yuko had top level motorcycle contacts in Japan, so we decided to organise this visit between us with the help of a ground agent in Tokyo.



had even started; some members from the Czech Republic arrived with broken bikes and a couple of German members had a fall on the campsite upon arrival. Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, and spare parts could be ordered.

During the week there were several games to take part in, and the most successful participant was crowned WIMA Woman of the Year. The games included a quiz about Allemansrätten and other things related to the forest, and a motorcycle rally with four competitions along the route as well as fun and games on site.

The meals were traditional smörgåsbord including salmon, herring and ham, as well as the perhaps lesser known blodpudding – a loaf made of blood. This was accompanied by snaps and snapsvisor (traditional songs to sing when you drink hard liqueur) and a joint Saint Lucia and Easter performance by the Swedish WIMA members' children all dressed up as Saint Lucia, Easter witches, gnomes and even a white elk. White elks are rare but can be seen in this region. There were home-made sweets for all; Swedes are big on sweets for all kinds of celebrations. Another evening offered traditional whole grilled pig and lamb.

Other activities included a guided tour to Magnor's glass workshop in Norway, a first aid course, a visit to Gammelvala – an old-style marketplace with food, arts and craft and, as a bonus, a parade with 300 classic cars and bikes.

On the last evening this year's WIMA winner Silke Stolley was announced and awarded with decorative glass objects from Magnor. Other prizes were handed out to the oldest participant, a 72-year-old lady from the Czech Republic. The youngest was a baby travelling with her mother. The furthest travelled participants came from Japan. The furthest travelled distance with a sidecar was a Finnish member.





1996 Czech Republic, Lubenec, 21-27 July

Although only 250 participants had been expected, the rally was attended by about 350 from 11 countries, including several Japanese riders, plus Olga Kojina from Moscow who came with her 18-year-old son. She was a motorcross champion in 1970 and rode a Jawa 350.



A total of 28 (including three male partners) flew out to Japan together: 11 Germans, six Swiss, nine from UK and two from the USA. After three nights in Tokyo, sightseeing by coach and boat, and sampling local food such as okonomiyaki, we boarded the Shinkansen bullet train (with a bento box for lunch) and sped fleetingly past Mt. Fuji to Kyoto.

Here we stayed at the temple Gesshin-In run by an eccentric Japanese monk with a passion for monkey bikes on which he would career round the temple grounds. Our first experience of tatami floors, sliding screens and communal baths and where we learned the hard way not to tamper with the settings of the sophisticated toilets... It was cold so we were given electric blankets to share as we slept together on futons on the floor – unfortunately they were very old and sparked alarmingly! First proper Japanese breakfast of seaweed, fish, miso soup and tea to fortify us for exploring the city. Guided tours introduced us to major temples and cultural activities such as Tea Ceremony, Koto Music, Kyogen (comic play), Kyomai (dance) and Bunraku (puppet play).

And finally, motorcycles – another Shinkansen to Hamamatsu where Yuko gave us a choice of visiting either the Honda or Yamaha factory. Then back to Tokyo with time to visit the Tokyo Motorcycle Show or Ueno Bike Town.

The highlight of the trip was dividing into four groups including about 20 Japanese riders to lead us and choosing from a wide selection of sponsored bikes from all four major Japanese manufacturers. We set off in heavy traffic west from Tokyo to the hill town of Shuzenji in Izu Peninsula, famous for its onsens or hot springs and another traditional hotel, serving only Japanese food and slept communally on tatami mats. Naturally we all sampled an onsen.

In the morning, we rode with our Japanese escorts up the iconic Izu Skyline, meeting for a group photo at the top of Hakone Mountain where we could also swap bikes. We were under strict instruction not to overtake each other on the mountain – which was totally disregarded by Ellen Pfeiffer who took off like a rocket and overtook everybody! Riding back to Tokyo, we sadly gave the bikes back. (I'd fallen in love with the brand-new Suzuki Bandit and ordered one as soon as they became available in the UK and kept it for 22 years.) On our last night, we had a final Japanese meal all together (with a huge fish head on each plate which challenged some of us!) and the exciting announcement that WIMA Japan was to be formed!



Chantal Hertrich from WIMA France shared her memories of the rally: We left, Pierre and I with Alexia, our daughter, who was 3½ years old and too small to travel by motorbike, so we took the car and my motorbike on a trailer. When we arrived at the WIMA camp, there were already a lot of people. What happiness to find the friends that we meet again as we do every year at the rallies! We settled into a room and in the evening, it was a joy to have a drink with everyone. The big tent was full and noisy.

This week, good weather allowed us to discover a beautiful region. The organisers, Charlotte Dubenova and Aléna Aulikova



of the Automobile Club of Prague, were very busy alongside Maria Zaluskà, our member from Czech Republic, and Lida Abrahamova. Other helpers were involved, of course.

The opening evening took place in a large hall in the city where the mayor and his wife welcomed us with speeches; there was music, majorettes and girls dancing. During this week, we raced on scooters, mini motorcycles, and did a handling test (gymkhana) with our motorcycles. And I believe it was BMW that had brought motorcycles to try. One evening, the local firefighters did an exercise to show us how they operate in an accident, to put out a burning car, and to rescue an injured person inside. Impressive!

One of the days, we took part in the touristic rally under sunny skies. We went up in a tower which dominated the city, visited a castle and had to find out the circumference of a huge tree. What a superb day! In the evening, there was the WIMA International general assembly, with the meal and the captains of all the countries present. A small trophy was given to each. So nice!!! Another day we went into Prague by bus. The driver spent the day with us, sometimes carrying Alexia on his shoulders. We went up to the castle, the residence of the president of the Czech Republic. It's a beautiful city. Another free day, we went to visit the beautiful spa town of Karlovy Vary.

There was a varied programme during this rally. On Friday evening, the tent was full for the awards ceremony. There were loads of prizes, cups and gifts to reward the participants in the events; there were rewards for everyone - even the children! Alexia got a cup and a diploma for being the youngest participant. She was very moved and on the verge of tears with everyone applauding. Ellen Schindler was WIMA Woman of the Year. It was late when we went to bed, but the happy evening continued late into the night without us, with the announcement of the next rally 1997, in Holland at Heythuysen.

On Saturday morning, everyone got ready for the big departure, with the promise to meet again in Holland. This rally was magnificent and superbly organised. For a country where few women rode motorcycles, WIMA was received magnificently.

1997 The Netherlands, Heythuysen, 4-8 August



The 1997 international rally took place during something of a mini heatwave. The venue was a camping field and there were 327 participants, limited for organisational reasons.

Conny Kiser from WIMA Switzerland wrote an article for *Moto Sport Schweiz*, partially reproduced here.

WIMA find ich prima! - I think WIMA's great!

On the 'free' Monday, some women take advantage of the hour, to plunder the local supermarkets. Others seize the opportunity to solve scavenger hunt puzzles at the same time. In the evening OK-Team-Holland present the weekly programme. The usual 'battle' at the buffet goes on: queue, hungry, cast envious glances at already-filled plates and then finally grab something from the grand offering. There is enough for everyone.

On Tuesday we visit the Arcen castle gardens - trees and flowers as far as the eye can see! Various gardens display





1998 Switzerland, Les Tuileries-de-Grandson, 27-31 July

INT. RALLY 1998



Les Tuileries-de-Grandson

The 1998 international rally was attended by 337 women from 15 nations. There were visits to local places of interest, a rally on Tuesday and gymkhana on Wednesday.

Monika Greiderer wrote about the rally for Toff Schweiz.

Bikerinnentreffen - Bikers' meeting

It is 6 am in Les Tuileries-de-Grandson near Yverdon. Two crows march majestically over the empty football pitch of the local sports club, obviously enjoying having the pitch to themselves, whilst a few metres away a colourful mix of tents are squeezed together like tinned sardines.

their full splendour and it's a pleasure to discover and smell the full beauty of nature. The evening disco and campfire tempt some women to sacrifice sleep on the altar of celebration.

Wednesday's gymkhana is for elite athletes. It starts with a tricky shootout goal wall. Well, what professionals on TV can't do shouldn't prevent us from at least trying. Then, like the Hunchback of Notre Dame, we hobble along a predetermined route with a wooden shoe and a small bucket of milk to meet with a nice Dutch woman at the end of the way with a stopwatch... Oh! And then the Skippy-T tour! With small sitting balls (space hoppers), a figure of eight course to be hopped as quickly and elegantly as possible. Manual dexterity and imagination are required for the fumble bin to identify the five objects in it (spark plugs, air filter, side stand, etc.) within a minute. The obstacle course has us tackling hurdles made of straw bales wrapped in black plastic, in a helmet, and carrying a rugby ball and water-filled serving tray back and forth. There is diving, sweeping, running and sliding, but the plastic tarpaulin holds up. Oh yes – the already slippery sheet has been greased! ... The women's band 'Groove the Princess' really heats up the evening, it's banging and rocking! We're exhausted.

The rally takes place on Thursday. The sun burns down on us mercilessly. Ride off - count roads - turn indicators - check references - turn around - continue riding. On small, fine and unusually flat roads, we curve from intersection to intersection. At a post we are allowed to try our luck with horseshoe throwing. At another checkpoint we must prove our slow riding skills.

On the last day, some go to the Clog Museum while others go to the lake shore and swimming pools.

This year prizes are kept to a minimum and the leader boards are not read to the bitter end. We will probably keep this for the future, and the Swede, Cecilia Woxblom, may be the last Miss WIMA at an international rally. We will form international teams for the first time at the 1998 rally in Switzerland, with only group performances being counted in the ranking list. This new arrangement makes it easier to deal with so many people present and above all, the international spirit comes to the fore.



The rising sun reflects off the shiny metal of a Harley, parked between a Moto Guzzi 900 and a Honda 200. The soft sound of guitars drifts from the festival tent and mixes with the morning mist and dew creating a slightly melancholic atmosphere.

Like every year, jobs and day-to-day chores are put aside for a week and bikers from different cultures become more and more like one big family. What counts is a shared hobby, the joy of games and fun and laughter as well as an acceptance of each other.



The biggest gift of the Rally is that everybody can take a piece of it home, therefore, even the longest trip seems not too far. Take Akiyo from Japan who flew in with 10 of her friends and created a 'Nepal-village' on the campsite, complete with shop and massage area and traditional clothing. There is Cecilia who travelled 2100 km from Sweden, whose journey took three days instead of two, because she didn't grab a well-earned nap on her Suzuki 1100. Manuela from Berlin, owner of a Harley 1400 is fascinated by the game 'Nabucco' – a team challenge for five women to master a course with their ankles tied together. 'The best rally ever' says Olga from Moscow, who is enthusiastic about the Swiss team who organised a Suzuki 500 so she could enjoy the twisty and outstandingly beautiful road above Lake Neuenburger. Thanks to Lydia from Bremen, there is now also a new WIMA member in Iceland. Maria, on a five-week tour of Europe on her Suzuki Intruder, stopped to ask Lydia for directions - they continued their journey together.

The Swiss team proved their special talent and engagement, decorating the tables with fresh flowers every day, and laying on games. Each game had a name like 'Alli mini Äntli' (a Swiss German children's song) where the contestants had to walk through water against the clock or 'Lila Pause' milking an improvised cow.

On Wednesday evening, a raclette dinner was provided to celebrate WIMA Switzerland's 20th anniversary, with a disco, fireworks and a band adding to the vibrant atmosphere. Honours were presented to Juliette Steiner, the first Swiss WIMA member, German Ellen Pfeiffer for 40 years membership and six others for 20 years.

After Friday's cocktails, farewell dinner and award giving, International President Sheonagh Ravensdale, thanked all the organisers, complimenting the perfect organisation which was heartfelt by everybody. Top WIMA women were Andrea Blind and Trui Hanouille. To announce next year's hosts, the German WIMAs delighted everybody with their presentation of a Bavarian Schuhplattler dance, dressed in Lederhosen.

1999 Austria, Walchsee im Kaiserwinkel, 25-31 July



The WIMA FANTASTICA 1999 rally was organised by Monika Greiderer from WIMA Germany who found a venue in her homeland in the beautiful Austrian Tyrol. The week's celebrations were at a comfortable terraced camping site by the lake, set in its own meadow with a communal marquee and a campfire area right next to the lake.

The leitmotif of this WIMA was to find out if there is 'sin in the Alps'. All games and tasks were based on this theme. The conclusion was that there is no sin in the Alps because everyone is too tired in the evening!

Annette Johann of WIMA Germany wrote the following for *Das Motorrad*.

Women on their hot irons met in Walchsee in the Kaiserwinkel

The Walchseers were amazed and at the same time pleased that around 270 women from 16 nations had chosen their village as the destination for this WIMA meeting on their 'hot irons'. The oldest WIMA rider at Walchsee was 68 years old, and the furthest travelled came from Finland.

Munich-based organiser, Monika Greiderer, wanted to bring this special women's motorcycle meeting to her homeland, and was helped by many volunteers.

In Walchsee, the motorcyclists were spoiled with culinary delights. The local young farmers surprised the visitors on the welcome evening with some hearty home cooking, typical grilled Tyrolean pressed dumplings. The opening evening was also attended by the local mayor who came to the campsite to officially open the event.

Everyone was treated by the local folk once again during the treasure hunt around the Wilder Kaiser Mountains, this time with their home-baked curd strudel. The sun was shining with the faces of the women; everyone agreed it was a very successful meeting in a beautiful country with warm and open-minded people.





2000 Australia, Kiama, 9-14 April



Jennifer Killen organised the rally and wrote this report: On the land of the WodiWodi people of the Dharawal nation, we were privileged to be able to hold a WIMA 2000 50th Anniversary Rally, on a continent which is home to the oldest civilisation in the world. We recognise their continuous connection

to culture, community and Country.

The year 2000 was a special year in many ways, not least because it was WIMA's 50th birthday. In Australia, we were thrilled to be hosting our first Southern Hemisphere International and sharing the golden anniversary celebrations with Finland.



For the first time, there was also a daily award ceremony with the winner of the day and a WIMA choir, where we all sang the specially composed WIMA song together every evening. Overall, it was a very nice, fun and harmonious WIMA, with the best weather and a great venue right on the lake.

Photographer Annette Johann captured some atmospheric images with her camera, which proved that not only the 'expert' handling of the machine is essential for the women; you could also be very feminine.



The week's event programme was:

- Monday – Games on the meadow, welcome evening with dinner and live music.
- Tuesday – Trial competition.
- Wednesday – Summer tobogganing competition.
- Thursday – Rally.
- Friday – Free day. Farewell dinner and award ceremony.

Every evening in the marquee there was a disco, drinks bar and barbeque stand.

This was the first ever international rally to be held down under and what a rally it was. We hosted about 140 WIMA women (and many brought partners). From overseas, some joined an organised tour with hired bikes, setting out from Melbourne. Others rode all the way to Sydney from Western Australia, across the Nullarbor taking 6 days in all - a 4000 km journey that sorts the women from the girls!

Our special guest of honour was the amazing Hazel Mayes, aged 78, who was a friend of Louise Scherbyn and founded the original WIMA Australia in 1950. A pioneer amongst women in



motorcycling, aviation and mechanics, Hazel worked not only as a motorcycle despatch rider but trained with the Australian Airforce to become an aircraft mechanic. You can read more about her here: <https://invenusveritas.com/the-petrolettes-blog/2017/5/9/hazel-mayes>

Kiama, the place 'where the sea makes a noise', welcomed these WIMA members from across our continent, our Kiwi neighbours from New Zealand and internationals from around the world. Michiko and husband Tei came from Japan while Europe was represented by France, Germany, GB, Holland, Sweden and Switzerland.

A spectacular site, Kiama gave us three gorgeous beaches within walking distance, and caravans with jacuzzis as well as a wonderful choice of coastal and mountain rides. We enjoyed ride outs to the Minnamurra Rainforest, the Southern Highlands, and perhaps best of all, Bundanon (meaning deep valley in the Dharawal language), a unique national arts organisation with an historic Australian homestead and wildlife sanctuary located on 1,000 hectares of pristine bushland. We browsed the art collection, went bushwalking or just relaxed in the ancient landscape.

Doonooch Aboriginal Dancers were standouts amongst evening entertainment. They even did a Reverse Rain Dance for us which must have worked as we enjoyed fine weather throughout, though Alice Springs flooded when some of our visitors arrived there after the rally.

The Trivia Night was great fun too and most of us were totally bamboozled by the questions. To the amazement of his friends, the winner of the Heads and Tails prize was GB member Rowena's husband Frank, who has no interest in motorcycles and would probably be hard put to distinguish a Ducati from a Harley. A felicitous mixture of strategy (copying his knowledgeable friends) and good luck – or perhaps it was sorcery.

Everyone enjoyed the traditional WIMA gymkhana of silly games which included The Shelley Slatcher Memorial Handbag Toss, without which no WIMA Australia rally is complete.

Sadly, all good things must end so we celebrated our final night, a great rally and many new friends with the prize giving and an energetic bush dance and thank you to everyone who travelled so far to make our rally so exciting and enjoyable.

2000 Finland, Iisalmi, 30 July-5 August

WIMA 50th jubilee rally



Iisalmi 30.7.-5.8.2000

Tia Riihiluoma of WIMA Finland provided the following information about the rally.

This 2000 international rally took place on the first week of August at Iisalmi, Finland. The venue was Koljonvirta Camping. It was the second time that Finland hosted, and it was a WIMA 50th Anniversary Rally.

Luckily for all the participants, the Finnish summer weather was at its best – the sun shone all week and there wasn't a drop of rain.



The rally programme was:

- Sunday – arrivals.
- Monday – evening welcome dinner, with a folk-dance group and an Irish band.
- Tuesday – gymkhana. There was also wood carving, guided by Jennifer Rung.
- Wednesday – parade. Kyykkä (squats), which is a popular Finnish outdoor sport. The squats are small cylindrical wooden blocks. The objective of the game is to get the squats out of the opponent's 5m² playing square by throwing a wooden club at them.
- Thursday – riding day to Jyrkkä. There was a fireplace and sausage frying as well as soot pan coffee.
- Friday – riding day to Runni. In the evening, the 50th Anniversary dinner and band.
- Saturday – departures.

A Finnish newspaper reported the following about the parade ride.

A parade of female motorists glittered in Iisalmi

Nearly two hundred female motorcyclists rode in a parade through the centre of Iisalmi around noon on Wednesday. Motorists gathered after the parade in the parking lot of Timosaurus and Agrimarket, and in no time the area was full of little boys and other motorcycle fans. Even if you weren't quite



2001 Spain, Castellar, 22-28 July



There were about 100 participants altogether from the UK, Germany, Holland, France, Belgium, Japan, Australia, Spain and Sweden.

With no WIMA Spain division, the rally was organised by WIMA members from the UK and Germany (Linda Bootheirstone, Hilary Walker, Wendy Abbot and Birgit Auchner) who were living in Spain, with help from Pat Thomson and Sheonagh Ravensdale in the UK.

Linda Bick (Bootheirstone) wrote this report: The venue was Campamento Jarandilla, a delightful spot which had camping and huts by a small stream and easy access to the local village of Castellar for shops, petrol etc. and to the 11th-century Moorish castle up the hill.

Though it was the height of the summer heat, we were able to organise many exciting events, both day and night and these were as follows:

- A historic ride across the runway in Gibraltar, led by a rider from the armed forces who had a big smile on his face. This was followed by a bus trip around Gibraltar to the summit.
- A bus trip to take the ferry to Morocco to visit Tangiers.
- A treasure hunt with clues from the camp to Tarifa, finishing at a beach bar. Birgit wrote clues in three languages for this.
- A cultural night where participants from the various countries dressed in their relevant costumes and performed a dance or sketch.
- A flamenco dance group who came to perform and give a dance workshop.



a fan, it was a thrilling experience to see 200 motorcycles at a time and ridden by female riders.

The low steady roar of the engines thrilled, and the rain kept away for the duration of the parade. There are participants from Europe, Australia and even Japan, but most of all from Germany. The parade went smoothly, with the support of the police.

A documentary film was made by Inari Uusimäki of the rally, 'Women and Motorbike'. It was partly filmed before the rally and partly at the rally.

The WIMA Finland Ladies Bike Club history book lists the following prize winners:

- Longest time in the sauna - Maki Kofuji from Japan - almost four hours!
- Longest ride - Sabine Böhm from Germany - 4870 km
- Most exciting ride to Iisalmi - Trui Hanoulle and Iris Heiremans from Belgium who came overland through the Baltic states and Russia
- Most beautiful bike - Susanne Flieri HD Fat Boy



2002 Czech Republic, Rožmitál pod Třemšínem, 29 July-4 August



The town of Rožmitál pod Třemšínem lies in a wide and shallow basin and is surrounded by the deep forests of the Brdy massif range of hills, southwest of Prague.

Ann Weir, from WIMA GB, recalled her arrival at the rally site: We found the camp about four miles out in the depths of a wood. Yahoo!

We've made it! Guards lifted the barrier and in we went; this was to be the 'norm' for the week's rally. We were checked in and we were checked out. Familiar faces greeted us and once our legs were mobile, we signed in. Clutching our goody bags, we set about to discover the camp and find our home for the week. The camp consisted of the main building, bungalows scattered throughout the gentle sloping field, or you could camp anywhere in-between. *Sheonagh adds:* The top man on the gate was armed, and huge with a big black beard and looked very scary, but always smiled at us. Security was a major concern. *The events of the week were reported by GB members Ann Weir and Doris Porter.*

On Monday: Group ride to the town of Rožmitál pod Třemšínem for a welcome speech from the mayor of the town. *Ann reported:* The rally proper started on the Monday morning doing silly things around the camp site which formed some of the points towards the overall winner. It was a hot day, so most were down to sun top and shorts. At 3 pm we all formed in line to take part in a mass ride into town for the welcoming speeches by the mayor and all his dignitaries. The town can't have known what had hit it, with 300 plus of us on bikes. It seemed like all 5,000 inhabitants had squashed into the town square too.

Tuesday: *According to Doris Porter,* this was the day of the 'tour' whereby you used your photocopied map to find the various controls where you stopped to do silly things... the route



- An evening in the village organised by the local council to meet the mayor who presented us with a trophy.
- An invitation to plant a tree in the Campamento to be named in our honour.

A gymkhana and an exercise to find the number of deliberate faults on Linda's bike. (*Sheonagh adds:* Linda was surprised when more faults were found than Linda was aware of!)

There were bars on the campsite run by the manager Pepe and his crew, and we organised silly games in the swimming pool. We were very grateful for that pool in the heat. We also had a goody bag with various items and T-shirts with the rally logo. On the final night, handmade trophies were presented to various participants, including a long-distance award which I believe went to a woman from Sweden.

A woman from Mallorca, Cati Coll, agreed to become the Spanish WIMA captain to start a new division there. The rally was a huge success, despite the heat, and it was hoped that the new Spanish division would organise another one in the future.





took us in a kind of circular route of 100 km. That evening was the captains' annual general meeting followed by the captains' dinner. The mayor turned up to join us, but we managed to persuade him not to come in. We also decided to leave the serious drinking until after the meeting, so we managed to get through the business fairly quickly.

Wednesday: Visit to the Holy Mountain during the day then a special organ concert in the church for rally participants. *Ann recalled:* The Holy Mountain at Svata Hora was quite something with its unique baroque work in silver and gold. Luxurious paintings decorated the cloisters, befitting any monastery or Italian church. At 4 pm we were treated to a rendition of the famous 'Hej mistře' Christmas Mass by the Rožmitál composer, JJ Ryba, in a church at Stary, just outside the town. After the performance, we were all invited up the stairs to view the organ and meet the maestro. Back at camp, we indulged in a bratwurst supper cooked on a griddle down by the big marquee at the bottom of the field. This was the venue for all the discos each night where one could boogie well into the next day if you had the energy.

Thursday: Trip to Prague, evening disco. *Ann said:* By 8 am the buses had arrived. It's always nice to return to Prague; there is so much to see and do, steeped in Bohemian history.

Friday: Free day and farewell dinner. *Ann recalled:* The farewell dinner took on the same format as the welcome supper with a rolling system of 300 of us coming and going, but at this one there was pudding! In the shape of a cream cake. The festivities continued down at the marquee after 9.30 pm where all the speeches were made, the flag handed over and us Brits were roped into a dance routine to encourage (!) everyone to come to England next year.

2003 England, Dorset, 20-26 July



The 2003 international rally was held at Hooke Court in Dorset near Beaminster, organised by the Dorset group of WIMA GB, led by Lu Travers and Pat Thomson. Dorset is a rural county on the south coast of England, a popular tourist destination with a UNESCO World Heritage coastline. Generally, this area has an excellent climate, but as it was a WIMA rally, there was rain for half of the week!



Pat Thomson, WIMA GB, reported: A school facility was taken over for the whole week, marquees erected, caterers brought in, a bar organised (essential), more toilets and showers. Accommodation was available for about half the rally participants with the remainder camping across the two fields. Eleven nationalities and over 300 participants took part. The husbands and boyfriends of the organising committee acted as security (and emergency mechanics) for the bike park and campsite, whilst we were involved in activities. We kept them supplied with their own mini marquee and a crate of beer. This arrangement seemed to work as they also collected the breakfast goods from the bakery in a nearby village as part of the deal.



The opening night entertainment was provided by a local ladies' Morris dance team; they invited audience participation in a stick dance (crash helmets optional).

Other activities during the week included a treasure hunt, showcasing parts of the region, team games, visits to local attractions, a quiz along with suggested rides, test rides and a cream tea with scones, jam and tea, provided by the local village in aid of their lamp post fund. The tea was sponsored by Dorset company Clipper Teas and can now be found all over the world.

A Ceilidh (a traditional dance) was held midweek, to shake down the cream tea, which involved some vigorous group dancing to a live band and a 'Caller' instructing us what to do next. We all did our best in the ensuing musical organised chaos. The cultural evening involving displays and presentations from participating countries was unforgettable.

The final evening was party time. More food, more wine and beer, more dancing... then farewell until next rally. The weather improved and several small groups stayed on in the southwest as part of their vacation.

2004 The Netherlands, Borculo, 1-7 August



The 2004 international rally in Borculo was attended by around 275 participants from 15 countries including 122 Germans and 37 Dutch. It was hot!

Jos Beerstecher from WIMA Netherlands reported: 30 degrees and not a breath of wind and not a cloud in the sky, it was so hot! And how many wasps there were!

On arrival on Sunday, it appeared that the communication with our guests from Japan had gone wrong regarding the bedding. They assumed that would be included. A roundup with the other participants quickly yielded enough sleeping bags.

On Monday there was an opportunity to participate in the traditional Dutch folk game 'klootschieten'. This is a game in which a predetermined course must be completed in as few throws as possible with a ball weighted with lead. As far as is known, without any major accidents, although it could happen that a team coming from behind managed to throw a little further and thus got too close to the teams that had started earlier. The advice was then to wait. This day it was also possible to register for the gymkhana. In the evening, the welcome buffet and the performance of the local folkloric dance group, the Diekhookse Klumkes. Of course, after a few dances, our guests were asked to join in.





2005 Sweden, Skåne, 1-5 August



This was the 47th WIMA rally, the European one, held in the same year as an international rally outside Europe. At that time, a rally in Europe was considered the official rally as more members would be present and the presidents' meeting would be better attended. This emphasis would change in time. 300 women from 19 countries participated and the location was a scout hut with a campground in Gyllebo, Skåne.



The field that was used for the gymkhana on Tuesday was divided in width for the different parts, such as biting a biscuit, spearing rings from a tandem, filling buckets with water that had to be transported in cups on the head while walking, tug-of-war and other games. Everything came to a standstill when a Japanese pair who had never cycled before and who, once on the saddle, could no longer reach the ground with their feet, did not cover the field in width, but probably in length due to a steering error. They provided an unforgettable and hilarious performance and eventually managed to return to their starting position without falling. Whether they had speared a ring is unknown and does not matter. The participants from then on will vividly remember the burst of laughter that crossed the field.

Wednesday was dominated by the tour ride and an evening stroll in Borculo. In view of the heat, many WIMAs had moved to the nearby lake to cool off, enjoy a lazy swim and sunbathe. This was also the day Lichtenstein finally arrived. Three beautifully attired ladies in homemade dresses trimmed with ladles, slippers and plastic bottles arrived in a carriage decorated with bunches of balloons and drawn by a team of horses. The horses were briefly upset by the crowds, but luckily the coach driver had them well in hand. Later that evening, the ladies performed ABBA songs.

On Thursday, people could choose to either go to the Veluwe Park and the Kröller Muller Museum, where a permanent exhibition of Vincent van Gogh is displayed, or to Het Loo Palace. In the evening a thunderous performance by the women's band 'Too Hot to Handle', a party band that raised the roof and despite the heat, the hall was swinging to every song.

Friday, the day of the parade. The parade was led by an old-timer ladder truck of the fire brigade. The captains of the participating countries sat in and on this car, behind it a string of motorcyclists, who together made a ride of about 30 kilometres in and around Borculo as a thank you for the hospitality. The farewell dinner and speeches, the award ceremony, the presentation of Sweden and the disco followed.



Anita Paulsson and Åsa Öhqvist, WIMA Sweden, wrote this report about the rally: We were treated to mixed weather and, as so often in Sweden, we experienced some heavy rain but also some beautiful sunny days.

The rally schedule offered a mix of activities; there were self-guided ride outs to Alestenar (Ale stones) in Kåseberga and Kungagraven (the king's grave) in Kivik. In the area was also the national park Stenshuvud and the popular cake buffet at



2005 New Zealand, Taupo, 18-24 November



The 2005 international rally in Taupo was attended by around 120 WIMA members with partners and family. Attendees were from Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom and other European countries.



Yvonne Forrest from WIMA New Zealand wrote this report about the rally, with additional information from Åsa Öhqvist WIMA Sweden: The idea for WIMA NZ to hold an international rally, came about when three of the then current committee members were attending the 2000 rally in Australia. Having chatted with a couple of the Aussie rally organisers, we decided that we could hold one in New Zealand - in five years' time. Our reasoning was that five years should give us plenty of time to organise it.

Taupo was chosen as the location, as it was in the middle of the North Island, and had a suitable holiday park with plenty of space, and a range of accommodation types to suit all. It was also close to a variety of cultural activities that we could incorporate into the rally to give it a real New Zealand flavour.

The rally started with a visit to Warrakei Terraces where we were treated to a haka - a traditional Maori greeting and challenge - plus evening meal, a Hangi which consists of food being cooked in the ground on hot stones. We were also able to walk around the village.

Other events included a trip to Orakei Korako thermal valley where boiling mud pools, geysers plus other thermal pools abound; the Agrodome in Rotorua to learn about sheep, watch



the café Kaffestugan Annorlunda; Sweden is famous for 'fika' (i.e. spending quality time with friends over a cup of coffee preferably with cake or a cinnamon bun). As usual, there were different games, such as the traditional Swedish garden game 'kubb', which is a game where you throw wooden batons to try and knock over the opponent's wooden blocks, and the Japanese took the win. We also tried our hand at archery led by Åsa Åkesdotter, professional sportswoman and WIMA member.

The evening entertainment included disco nights and live music as well as an after dark fire-art performance by the entertainment group Enjoy.

Some special features were the gentlemen's dinner for accompanying partners and the lottery where you could win a sightseeing tour by helicopter. The lucky winner was Conny Tanner from Switzerland. The farewell dinner was whole roasted pig for carnivores and corn on the cob for vegetarians.

The police-led parade took us to Simrishamn, where we could display our bikes at the harbour, while having a stroll or perhaps even an ice-cream. We were fortunate with splendid weather for this day.



them being shorn, plus a chance for our guests to shear a sheep themselves. There was a visit to the gondola and the luge, plus a day's ride around the mountains taking in a number of historic places and sites and showing off the Central Plateau of New Zealand.

On the final day of the rally, various games were held including helmet toss, a cross-dressing challenge, egg and spoon race, a motorcycle slow race and obstacle course. The day also included an impromptu event suggested by the guys. Each of them auctioned themselves off to wash a WIMA member's bike; the highest bidder won with all proceeds going to the India Street Kids Project.

To round it all off, our final dinner was a typical Kiwi barbecue.

Åsa Öhqvist remembers: This was my first international rally outside Sweden. I had joined the organisation the previous autumn and worked at the Swedish international rally and I must admit that it was the prospect of travelling abroad and taking part in such events that pulled me into WIMA. Arriving in New Zealand was so exotic; the rally site was beautiful and the excursion to see the steaming mud at Orakei Korako and the rides around the mountain of Ruapehu were amazingly mindboggling. It was only two of us from Sweden, Charlotta our vice president and I, and we were met by Tina Hartung from Towanda Women, and we joined up with our small group of riders who were to tour all around New Zealand after the rally. New Zealand is an amazing place for motorcycling and WIMA New Zealand and husbands were such a friendly lot and made us all feel so welcome. One of the highlights for me was a spontaneous ride to Napier together with a couple of the New Zealand members. It was simply just a ride there and back for lunch - but the roads were amazing, and I learned that cc is nothing compared to skills as I was left in the dust behind a 250cc (in Sweden a 650cc is a small motorbike, no one even rides 250cc). Another refreshing insight was to meet their president... who rode a scooter. Where I come from, a scooter is not a motorbike regardless how big it is. Swedes are narrow minded like that, or at least they were back then. For me, WIMA has been a continuous learning experience about other cultures and different references, and it all started in New Zealand. I also learned that pumpkin can be a part of any dish, even pizza.

2006 Switzerland, Hoch-Ybrig, 14-19 August



14. - 19. AUGUST 2006

The village of Unteriburg, close to the rally site of Hoch-Ybrig, in the Swiss canton of Schwyz, welcomed around 270 WIMAs from all over Europe, and from countries much further afield, such as Russia and Japan, with a welcome speech from the mayor.

The programme for rally 'WIMA ALPINA' included an opening ceremony with welcome dinner, gymkhana, rally 'On the way with Heidi', a mountain pass challenge, campfire, discos, farewell ceremony and dinner, and surprises. Participants were welcomed with gift bags made from maps, containing items to make life in camp easier along with memories of Switzerland.



Ann Weir, from Wales, recalled her soggy arrival at the rally site, and the rest of the week's activities: There was a warm welcome with equally warm soup. The Swiss girls literally stripped off my wet gear at the bar of the marquee and plunged me into a borrowed fleece. I was then frog marched to the showers to climb into warmer clothing, after a superbly hot shower of course.

The rally site this year was in a superb location up the mountain cul-de-sac of Hoch-Ybrig, where the huge cable cars run up to dizzy heights using a series of chair lifts.

This year, the rally took on a slightly different format and one with a 'pass challenge'. You had a day plus to get up and down as many passes as you could in the given time, all for a certificate if you managed 10 or more. They were all marked on a master map so you could pick and mix as much as you dared. As I'm one for any challenge, I went for it and managed 11 in a day and a half - some easy - some white-knuckle rides. I went up so many on the Tuesday, that I felt dizzy when back at the campsite.



2007 Germany, Thuringia, 29 July-4 August



Report by Verena Reindl, WIMA Germany president at that time: With 327 participants from 13 countries, this rally was one of the most successful since the beginning. It was held in 'the green heart of Germany', in Thuringia, one of the smallest but most beautiful states in the country.

As an alternative to the challenge was the 'Jodlmesse'. Taking the mountain railway up to the mountain top to meet Heidi in traditional dress and be entertained by yodelling while enjoying the panorama.

We had the gymkhana events in the multi-story car park where most of the 'alternative campers' camped, due to some terrible weather early in the week. Me? I just went for the small camping field across two stream bridges.

Wednesday was the day of 'the tour' with silly things to do at three checkpoints along the approximately 105 km route, where we were treated to yet more spectacular scenery, cool lakes, mist around the mountains; the sun even poked out at the lunchtime stop at a lovely lakeside restaurant. All the challenges were built around the Heidi story with lots of dressing up involved and races against the clock.

Thursday was the day of the bike blessing. A mass ride was planned into Einsiedeln to the famous monastery where the Abbot came to the front of the crowd, said a few prayers in German, then blessed all the bikes. Today turned out hot, so we all dispersed into the many cafés around the square for sustenance. That evening, an impromptu concert had been arranged, and the Swedes gave a hilarious display of ABBA dressed up in anything they could muster.

In 1989, the wall between East and West Germany fell and many women, especially from abroad, were thrilled that they were allowed to get to know the former East Germany. The youth hostel 'Am Hausteich' set in a nature reserve with a lake in Plotten, was full to bursting; tents stood between the houses and the atmosphere was overwhelming.



The parade led to the Schleizer Dreieck, a world-famous racetrack, and the oldest in Germany. The gymkhana was a lot of fun for everyone, and the international teams competed against each other on wooden skis, balancing dumplings in a handcart, rolling tyres and other fun games. The prepared 'Kultour' competition lasted all week and led through the varied landscape with its rugged mountains, narrow valleys, endless forests, alongside rivers, past countless castles and palaces and showed the state of Thuringia in its full beauty. Activities also included a volleyball tournament lasting from Tuesday





to Thursday, and a kids' contest, to give mothers a chance to participate in the 150 km rally ride on the Wednesday.

The large beer tent was occupied every evening with a different event. There were campfires each night, a disco, the women's band 'Rainbow Sally', karaoke, a barbecue evening and the Trash evening that has become a nice tradition.

The delicious Saale-Unstrut wine, the Apolda beer and the 'Klopfer & Kümmerling' (small liqueur bottles), which enjoyed great popularity, were sold at reasonable prices at the beer cart. Large ice cream cakes with shimmering sparklers rounded off the delicious farewell buffet and a 15-minute high-altitude fireworks display lit up the night sky as a surprise.

In short, this rally was a complete success, historically, organisationally and socially.

2008 Finland, Historic Saimaa in Ristiina, 4-9 August



Report written by Ninnair Nurmi, WIMA Finland: A group of about 40 volunteers started the preparations already on Saturday the 2nd by getting the road and info signs in place, checking the campsite and decorating the area.

Almost all the rally participants arrived during Monday, in good time before the welcome dinner. There were some problems to start with, an overflowing toilet and a leak in the big tent, but nothing that couldn't be fixed. The day was full of action even when we didn't have anything official organised. People were setting up their camps and meeting old friends and getting to know new ones.

The theme for the Monday evening was medieval times. The kitchen was not prepared to have so many and such hungry people, so food ran out and they had to warm up some left-over soup. It was quite embarrassing but later in the evening people got extra sandwiches and everybody was pleased.

The main event of the evening was the WIMA baptism. People were guided to a hut in the middle of the forest and there we had two shamans talking gibberish (actually Finnish but for most people it sounded like gibberish). They marked everybody with a spot of coal soot and gave them runestones. At the hut we also had three of our motorcycle sisters showing some amazing talent of fire-eating and blowing.

Tuesday's activity was viewing rock paintings. 100 people travelled to the site, by boat or by motorcycle. Everybody was amazed about the paintings, imagine, they were painted some 3000 years BCE!!! We also had a beach party. The weather was not so warm anymore and the girls wore bikinis over their normal clothes to get into the mood. There were games too, 'hell-on-wheels' seemed most popular. After shivering outside it was heavenly to go and relax in the sauna before plunging into the sea. The evening was reserved for karaoke and dancing.





Wednesday was for motorcycle orienteering; there were five places to visit, and time was limited. Once you got to the spot, there was either a question to answer or a task to perform. The funniest thoughts came when people tried to guess what the ice picks were used for!

In the evening, we had the Fantasy Party. There were a hairdresser and a make-up artist to get all guests ready. We had shamans again, a scary troll, a punk geisha, couple of cats, witches and of course the true blondes (wigs) among the party people. The team from Sweden won the contest of the best act with their musical presentation of old TV characters. WIMA Japan presented their rally invitation for 2010 and they got a lot of interest. After the shows there was a Finnish singer, Saija Varjus, singing and later also a DJ giving the beat for the party.

Thursday was the parade! It was quite a majestic sight when about 200 bikes rode from Heimari to Ristiina. We had a polar bear on one bike and a Santa on another. The parade was led by the priest who then gave the gospel at the church of Ristiina. Later there was a market with food and warm drinks and lots of things to buy. In the evening the party was in Metsälinna, a dancing place in Ristiina. They had two bands, one playing dancing music, and the other one a bit heavier stuff. In the middle there were dance instructors showing people to dance square dance. Everybody was dancing their feet off!

Friday started out wet. It was literally pouring, and everybody just waited for the rain to stop but there was at least one girl who was determined to get as many points from 'MC spin' as possible. It had 17 places to visit and was intentionally made so that it would be quite impossible to go through all of them. Erica rode 500 km that day when searching for the places around Ristiina and the neighbouring villages. She got the first prize at the evening farewell party. Then we gave presents for achievements in orienteering, 'hell-on-wheels' and other activities. Over 100 people got something. Finally, we gave the WIMA flag to USA, it's their turn to get WIMA family together again in 2009.

2009 Italy, Lignano, 19-25 July



Report by Monika Greiderer from WIMA Germany: 'WIMA al Mare' was organised by Monika Greiderer, together with a group of friends including two Swiss women Christa and Maya. They called themselves 'The Ramazottis'. 333 participants came from nine countries to this very hot rally by the Adriatic

Sea. The rally price was €179.00 in a tent on a campsite in the summer resort town of Lignano Sabbiadoro (which means golden sand), between Trieste and Venice in north-eastern Italy.



This rally had a Mafia theme – participants had to form themselves into groups of five or 'clan teams' and amongst other tasks, they had to search 'a corpse' in the pool for identification papers. On the Tuesday, when temperatures were over 30°C, participants rode for 90 minutes to Jesolo before boarding a private ferry to Venice - and were astonished to find another 'corpse' floating beside the boat.

Pool games provided a welcome break from the heat on Wednesday, followed by a barbecue in the evening, and on Thursday, participants rode through the mountains to the border with Slovenia. There were also opportunities to visit local places of interest such as Aquileia, a strategic colony town dating back to Roman times, Grado, an island in the lagoon between Venice and Trieste, and Trieste itself.

And never to be forgotten on the final day, was a helicopter flight from which red rose petals rained down on the women in the pool, accompanied by the song 'Für mich soll's rote Rosen regnen' (Hildegard Knef).

2009 USA, Keystone, Colorado, 18-22 August



Report written by Alice Sexton, WIMA USA president at the time: The first official WIMA International rally held outside of Europe and adjacent countries since Louise Scherbyn founded the group in 1950 in the USA (aside from a 20th Year Anniversary celebration in New York in 1970), was in 2009 – only a short 59 years since inception. Until this year, when rallies were held both in Europe and further afield, the European rally had been designated the official one.

In an effort to re-introduce 'international' to the Women's INTERNATIONAL Motorcycling Association, the small USA team of WIMA, under the leadership of President Alice Sexton (2002-2011), aimed to demonstrate that joining with other women rider contemporaries, and national women's motorcycling groups was a valuable way to not only provide 'rally' amenities that a small WIMA membership could not afford on its own, but to spread the word of WIMA to the 1,000+ women conference attendees from around the world who were not yet WIMA members!

In partnering with the AMA's 5th Annual Women's Conference, WIMA USA hoped to demonstrate that there were many alternatives and tools available to make each WIMA International rally unique. The AMA provided demo rides, conference seminars, notable women speakers, and hands-on workshops, all of this very different from the usual WIMA European rallies. This plan provided fantastic amenities, none of which WIMA USA could have afforded, and all for basically the same cost as other WIMA European rallies.

The idea was to give WIMA countries with smaller memberships, a blueprint to partner with other groups so that their members, who could not afford to travel to Europe every year, had a chance to experience the 'international' aspect in their own country and not bear the financial burden themselves. Scherbyn's main goal in forming WIMA was to correspond, interact and share resources with women riders around the globe, and with the 2009 rally, WIMA USA strived to meet this goal.



WIMA International rally USA 2009 attendance included USA and Japan. Michiko Hitomi (president of WIMA Japan at the time), Keiko Osawa (Michiko's successor) and six other members from Japan, hailed Jody Waltemeyer as instrumental in arranging details and transport for their attendance, thank you Jody! The WIMA members met up for a pizza party the evening before the Conference started.

Louise Scherbyn would be proud that WIMA USA, 59 years after her founding, blazed the trail to the Japan 2010 rally at the foot of Mt. Fuji and the 2015 Australian rally at Phillip Island by hosting the first WIMA International rally outside of Europe. Our USA Team at Keystone consisted of Alice Sexton, Sarah Schilke, and Jody Waltemeyer.

2010 Japan, Fujinomiya-city, 27 April-3 May



Report written by Keiko Osawa, later president of WIMA Japan, with additional information from Åsa Öhqvist, WIMA Sweden and Sheonagh Ravensdale, WIMA GB: This rally was held during cherry blossom season at the foot of Mt. Fuji, in Fujinomiya, Shizuoka. 258 members from around the world attended,

despite the air traffic turmoil due to the volcanic eruption in Iceland that occurred just before the rally.

The concept of 'pre-rally' was first introduced at this rally and many members participated in the five-day sightseeing bus tour that was offered before the rally. Over 200 had opted to rent a bike and after the pre-rally, they gathered in Yokohama. The bike rental was well organised and, since everyone had been asked to provide all their details beforehand, the delivery of the rental bikes was very smooth. After receiving the bikes, members were grouped with a tour guide from WIMA Japan who made sure that everyone reached the rally site without any problems, despite a cold, damp journey of about 120 km. Fortunately, everybody was staying in warm, heated huts! The first couple of days were very cold and misty, so when the sun finally came out and Mt. Fuji was suddenly revealed in all its glory, the sight was spectacular.

The Japanese WIMA team, led by Yoshiko Ota and Keiko Osawa, plus numerous volunteers, had made sure there was a full schedule with a wide variety of rides and cultural activities, including of course a Japanese tea ceremony. There were plans for rainy days and sunny days, for riding and resting.



The rally quiz ride was an opportunity to explore the beautiful surroundings around Mt. Fuji, and hopefully find some quiz answers. The sites along the route included a torii gate, a Mt. Fuji viewing spot and a motorcycle museum, among others. Members could also visit the lovely Fairy Café, owned by a courageous lady, Reiko Miyoshi (Yamamura), who rode the Dakar rally in her youth. She came to the rally site to give an inspirational talk one evening.

In the evenings, everyone gathered in the dinner hall for food, all very nicely prepared and delicious. Along with the food there was plenty of Japanese wine, both red and white, as well as sake to sample and further activities to join. On one evening, a local group of female taiko drummers took to the stage for a mesmerising display, before inviting WIMA members to join them. On another, a female musician gave a demonstration of the Koto, which is a Japanese plucked half-tube zither instrument, and the national instrument of Japan. Participants also joined a discussion about the motorcycle licence requirements in different countries and produced their own often very funny entertainment on the traditional 'Trash Night'.

The parade consisted of two activities; firstly, the WIMA group took part in a 'Love the Earth' event where everyone helped clear litter from a nearby area. This is a regular event for WIMA Japan in which the international guests were welcome to take part. This was followed by a convoy led by women motorcycle police to a military camp where there were various entertainments such as stunt riders and another superb drumming display, this time by the men.



2010 The Netherlands, Markelo, 2-7 August



Report written by Jos Beerstecher, WIMA Netherlands: A rally with typical Dutch weather at a beautiful location in the heart of Twente, with the theme 'Witte Wiev'n' (the spirits of wise women in Dutch Low Saxon mythology dating back to pre-Christian times).

The programme is interspersed with the theme and the hall is decorated with women dressed in white, flying around on broomsticks.

On Sunday, 1st August, some guests are already trickling in, and by the 2nd, there are more than 200 WIMAs on site. As tradition dictates, the event opens with a welcome speech and dinner, followed by a disco.

On Tuesday, it's the gymkhana and because the weather is a bit changeable, there are also games inside. The most eye-catching game is completing a course with clogs tied together, a leg breaker if you lose your balance. The prize giving takes place in the evening.

On Wednesday there is a rally ride with a quiz. It is pouring with rain, which is a reason for many women to either not go, or to go into a pub after about 30 km and stay there for the rest of the day. Still, about 100 participants managed the entire ride and found the answers to the quiz questions. At five o'clock,



only a handful of women have returned; by six o'clock one after the other, the WIMA women come dripping into the office to hand in sometimes completely sodden quiz forms. Perhaps the ride was a bit too long... The suffering is soon over when you can dance in the evening to the music played by DJ Vette Tante.

The weather on Thursday is good, fortunately, with blue sky and white clouds - a beautiful day for the parade. Under police escort, we drive to Ruurlo to look for the white woman in the maze of straw bales. The WIMAs can then practise archery and eat pancakes there. In the evening, the girl band pEp plays, and you can dance again until the late hours.

The farewell dinner is on Friday evening. The caterer has done his best with, among other things, a mermaid, who is draped prominently on the table. This is followed by a performance evening and the voting for the most beautiful, white-dressed female of the week. How creative everyone has been! The German ladies perform a modern version of the legend of the Witte Wiev'n from the programme booklet, even riding a motorcycle onto the stage. The Swedish women sing a song in white with candles on their heads. There's a collaboration between Curaçao, Germany and the Netherlands, who perform a play together. It is true that the story is no longer completely clear, but what sticks in the mind is that a toilet brush is one of the attributes with which the hall is blessed. Also, the sentence 'Ich bin der schöne Prinz' and the image of Louis occasionally appearing from behind a sheet, and only saying that one sentence, is still sharp on the retina. Rock solid through the power of repetition. Other German WIMAs have made beautiful masks with plaster and bandages.

The one woman show that eventually wins in the solo category is hilarious. I forget the name of the winner, but she manages to make the audience giggle in a dress, only with a wig, a clown nose and a whistle. Awesome! That same evening, Rita Koopmanschap appears to be accompanied in her tent by three 'Witte Wiev'n' who have been taken from the hall; it takes a while before she can crawl into her sleeping bag.

And then it's over. Saturday 7th, we wave goodbye in the hope of meeting again the following year.



2011 England, Lancaster, 25–30 July

Report by Val Newman, president of WIMA GB at that time: The University of Cumbria Campus at Lancaster was the venue for this rally as it provided single rooms, dining facilities, an events hall with a bar, camping and a sports field. There were 240 participants from 11 Divisions, with the majority opting for a room. The campsite was uniquely set around the actual university buildings, rather than in the usual field setting. For the first time, we had WIMA members from the new Korean division.

The theme throughout was 'Back to School', based on a famous book and tv series in England called 'St Trinian's'. This provoked a lot of very silly behaviour in the evenings (!) and the wearing of blue striped ties, short skirts and long white socks. Pigtailed also became very fashionable around Lancaster, during the rally week, especially at the welcome and farewell dinners.

The guest of honour at the welcome dinner was the mayor of Lancaster, with his consort, and his beadle. The deputy mayor and his wife also visited. There was a discotheque each evening, and Kinisha, a brilliant Tina Turner tribute act, sang at the farewell dinner. Participants were also entertained by the Belfagan Women's Morris Dancers - Morris dancing is a form of English folk dance dating from the 15th century, and was originally only performed by men, but times have changed.

Activities during the week included options to visit Muncaster Castle, with its owls and hawks, the magnificent ruins of Lowther Castle, and a steam train and lake steamer trip. Lancaster Castle, used as a prison since the 12th century and the grim scene of witchcraft trials in the 17th century, and the seaside resort of Morecombe were also popular visits. We were very lucky with the weather all week, so participants ranged far and wide on their bikes. One group even went over to the Isle of Man and another rode to the east coast of England and back in a day.

The sports afternoon consisted of teams competing in traditional children's games like a three-legged race, tug-of-war, riding the mechanical bull, apple bobbing and ball throwing.



2012 Austria, Reingers, 29 July-4 August



Michaela Sanda from WIMA Austria kindly provided this report: After much hesitation, we decided to host an international rally. Our team consisted of two people - Lili and Birgit - who were responsible for organisation and coordination with other WIMA members helping alongside. Lili and Birgit were both based in the northern part of Lower Austria, and they found a wonderful campsite in Reingers.

The venue was run by Astrid and her staff at the Hemp Hall (museum and shop of hemp-based goods) and they were at our disposal for the whole week. The weather also played along for the most part.

The participants arrived on Sunday and got settled in. On Monday, two of us led a small group to Wachau. Some unplanned delays almost caused this group to miss the welcome dinner. Fortunately, there were some national presidents among the tour riders, so the welcome dinner did not start without this group!



On Tuesday our parade took place, where we thankfully had a police escort, which guaranteed a safe ride. The route led us from Reingers via Heidenreichstein to Alt-Nagelberg, where we changed to the historical railroad and were welcomed with music in Schönau. The music and folk-dance programme there was well received by our guests.

Wednesday was dedicated to Vienna, where three quarters of the participants were taken by bus and spent the day. The Heurigen (Austrian wine tavern) on the way back in Maissau was also very much appreciated. The day was concluded with a small fireworks display by the Swiss women on the occasion of their national holiday.

The rally on Thursday tested many different skills: navigation skills through the northern Waldviertel to find the stations (for example, the Bismarck Tower near Rosenau Castle to answer the question about the builder and year of construction); good estimation skills (how high is the highest stone of the basilica?); creativity in answering the question (what is hanging above the fallen 'Wackelstein'? literally 'wobble stone', a stone that you, according to the myth, can wobble if you touch it at the right point, due to its position on other stones); geographical knowledge of Austria in order to be able to draw Vienna, Reingers and the Großglockner in the right place on an outline map; and a bit of sporting ambition in 'ball target shooting' and 'fishing' on the Xundwärtsparcours at Hirschenwies (fitness parkour).

On Friday, the programme included relaxation, some preparations of the participants for the journey home, unfortunately also a visit to the hospital to treat a broken forearm and our farewell evening. At the request of some participants, the 'colourful evening' also took place in this framework. And as before, Nadse provided for a lively atmosphere with her music programme.

The farewells on Saturday were warm. We received a lot of very positive feedback for our WIMA rally. In retrospect, it was exhausting, but also very beautiful and uplifting.

2013 Switzerland, Val-de-Travers, 14-20 July



Report written by Åsa Öhqvist, WIMA Sweden: The WIMA rally was held in the French speaking part of Switzerland in Val-de-Travers, and our camp was on the sports ground in the village of Couvet. We had access to all the facilities, overseas guests stayed in the accommodation and there was a cafe and a swimming pool too.



We had lovely weather, better than I could imagine after last year's nightmare ride over the cold and rainy Susten Pass. The days were sunny, warm and perfect for riding while the evenings were only a wee bit chilly.

One of my favourite parts of the WIMA rally is the parade. I find it so exciting when everyone gets their bikes ready with flags or other national accessories and the following ride is always very emotional; it feels so powerful to ride through the neighbourhood with all my WIMA friends. This year the parade took us a bit up into the mountain and afterwards we all gathered at a meeting point and ate fruit and buns while admiring each other's bikes.

In the evenings there was entertainment, and the food was outstanding, very high quality, nutritious and delicious! And to top it all, on the last evening there was a cake buffet.

Time passed quickly and too soon the week had come to an end. Everyone was busy packing up to head on or head home, but not before promising to meet again next year.



2014 Poland, Zakopane, 4-8 August



Report written by Ann Weir, WIMA GB:
The rally was hosted in a huge hotel in Zakopane, at the base of the Tatras Mountains. Given the weather, most of us were very grateful not to be camping! In fact, there was no camping. Rapidly renamed the 'Thunder and Lightning Rally', this first WIMA rally in Poland attracted 249

participants from 15 countries.

Monday was a day of exploration on foot into the very busy resort town of Zakopane. In the winter it comes into its own as a popular ski resort. In the height of summer, we found the local pedestrianised marketplace complete with horse-drawn carriages, stalls selling tourist gifts, and some local cheeses. We were grateful for the many 'al fresco' cafes with awnings which came into their own when the many downpours occurred, often in the late afternoon. Everywhere one looked, there were people wearing multi-coloured plastic ponchos with pointy hoods. Back at the hotel, dinner buffet was served at 7 pm which proved popular.

Wednesday was the day of the parade and guess what? Yup – more rain – this time in bucketfuls, so much so that the start was put back half an hour, not that it deterred us! Away we all went with a police escort to a pretty restaurant area, then on to a ski lift area by which time it had stopped raining. Off came the wet gear and up we went, two to a chair, into the clouds. At the top, we had just enough time for a hot chocolate or coffee from the log cabin before we were summoned back down the mountain and back to the restaurant as before. We took over the top floor of the huge place to order à la carte and once refreshed, we were treated to a display from a local dance troupe with participants of all ages – children, teens and adults – wearing traditional dress. Back at the hotel, outside the dining room, there was a big screen where we saw ourselves on the parade via national television plus Claudia, the international president, who had been interviewed at the ski place.

Thursday was the day of the treasure hunt, a kind of orienteering on bikes. First, we collected our map and instructions from the office, then we plotted our own route to call in at the many checkpoints. We had fun touring the sights and finding the controls which weren't always where they were supposed to be! Back at the hotel, I realised we had missed the last checkpoint, not far from the hotel but up a huge hill and by another ski lift. I shot off with the others in hot pursuit to find the control car, and here we found an added attraction – that of a fellow in a silly horse costume and the rally photographer taking as many equally silly pics as he could. The winners of this game were the first four girls who had zoomed around the course at break-neck speed to finish the route by 2 pm.

After supper, the Dibley family had most of us Brits cajoled into their 'band' for the talent contest to be held in the bar, and boy, did we have fun with all the improvised instruments. We never found out if we had won the entertainment competition,



but the applause was thunderous – no other country came close.

The last rally day, Friday and the Dibleys had arranged for all us Brits to have a ride up the Kasprowy Wierch via cable car. We left at 10 am in fine-ish weather which soon turned misty and cloudy. After two cable car rides, we were well and truly in the clouds at the furthest peak, so we had to make do with postcards of the sights to remember the day. One thing cannot be controlled – the weather. And typically, once back at the hotel, we had a lovely view of the mountain in the afternoon sunshine.

Friday's dinner was a sumptuous affair with the tables laid most elegantly and with four courses to go, we were well 'stuffed'. A small awards ceremony followed, and the main Ellen Pfeiffer award was presented to GB member Anna Zee (previous chair of the British Motorcyclists Federation (BMF) and later president of the Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations (FEMA)). President Val accepted it on her behalf.

Those who wished to party did so in the bar afterwards, but for some of us it was an early night, ready for an early start the next day for the long ride home.

2015 Sweden, Sundet, 20-25 July



Rally report written by Swedish WIMA members Anita Paulsson and Åsa Öhqvist: The European rally was held in Sundet, Vittaryd, in the region of Småland, in the south of Sweden. Around 200 women from 11 countries attended: Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, The Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom.

This was a camping-only rally under the slogan 'back to basics' and those who couldn't camp stayed in B&Bs nearby. There were camping kits that overseas members could buy so they too could enjoy the camping experience.

The weather wasn't fantastic, but despite the cold and sometimes rainy weather, members were busy making plans for riding: Kalmar and the bridge over to Öland and Allvaret; Mollö where you can see over to Denmark; Lund with its University; Vimmerby and Astrid Lindgren's World; and the Elk Park outside Ljungby, to name just a few.

Despite most people being away during the days, there were always things going on at the campsite. People cooking, doing laundry, just lazing around or going for a swim at the beach nearby. In addition to this, we had the opportunity to hear Pat and Sheonagh's inspirational presentation about riding in India.

As always at WIMA rallies, there are silly games, and this year was no exception. The teams showed their skills during three different tasks, finding numbers wearing a cone was the first. This was followed by the Heidi-game, i.e. to dress up with lipstick, apron and headscarf and consume a fizzy drink as quickly as possible. The last game was to catch water balloons in water and carry them with your mouth.



Among the meals served were the classic herring open sandwich and 'pyttipanna' (a dish traditionally made of leftovers cut in pieces). As desserts, traditional apple cake and sticky chocolate cake were served.

Every night we had either a live band or a disco and the WIMA bar was open almost all the time. The bar staff had as much fun as the ones buying the drinks.

The traditional parade went to the local bike meet in Tydinge. In this region, local bikers meet at this café on Thursdays for something to eat and a chat. The bikes are always counted at the entry because the owner donates 1 sek per bike to the Chernobyl Fund. On a normal Thursday there are around 700 bikes; the previous record was of 890 bikes - our arrival contributed to smashing that and setting 1120 as the new record, and a donation of 120 euros. WIMA and our support riders contributed with more than 200 bikes. The local newspaper had advertised our coming, which probably contributed to a few more bikes arriving than usual.

Furthermore, we held auctions and lotteries to collect money for our own charities. We raised a total of 6500 sek (about 695 euros) for WIMA International's elected charity, Motorcycle Outreach and a further 10000 sek (about 1070 euros) was raised for WIMA Sweden's chosen charity, the Cancer Fund.

This rally was organised with the support of the local bike club Hermans Hedningar.



2015 Australia, Phillip Island, 19-25 October



This report is by Moira Stewart, who was president of WIMA Australia at the time, and organiser of the rally: 83 WIMA members from 12 different countries attended the international rally held at Phillip Island, Victoria. Members came from Australia, Austria, Great Britain, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Japan, The

Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA. In addition, Sangeetha Jairam from India attended as a guest of WIMA Australia, so in total, 13 countries were represented, including 57 from overseas - a great turn out. I was really pleased that so many members came so far for our rally, both nationally and internationally.

The weekend before the rally, many guests attended the pre-rally at the Phillip Island MotoGP. Volunteering as marshals or medical staff is a recurring activity among WIMA Australia members, but for the international guests this was a novel experience and no doubt a memory for life. Upon arrival we were all registered and duly trained for our duties, and then the WIMA women were spread out over the different sectors all around the track. Although marshalling is hard work and demands constant concentration, it is also a unique experience to get a chance to see motorsport up close and, on occasion, even touch the bikes. Part of your job is to pull out the ones who crash and recover the bike or help the rider take off again to continue racing. In addition, as marshals, you not only get a close-up view of the track, but you also get access to the paddock as well. The orange overall and tabard is your access card, and you can walk right in, have a look at the teams at work in the garages and even meet the riders. After the finish on the Sunday, you could go up to the podium and get a close-up view of the winners, what a treat!

The rally venue, The Shearing Shed, was close to Cowes and other towns, tourist attractions, fabulous roads and scenic views. The meals were delicious and the staff friendly – everything a rallygoer could want. The organised rides went through coastal, farming and hilly regions around the Gippsland region, and everyone seemed to enjoy the twisty and curvy roads, especially if they saw wallabies, kangaroos, echidnas,



emus or wombats. There were also local places to visit like the Koala Park and Churchill Farm at Phillip Island. We were blessed with sunny, spring weather every day except the day we went to Healesville, when we rode through twisty roads made hazardous by the wind and rain.

As entertainment, WIMA members from overseas and local members performed a variety of national traditions, old and contemporary. The Japanese girls won the prize for best show with their lively song and dance routine while dressed up as Japanese mascots.

One of the highlights of the week was the visit to the Penguin Centre on the shores of Phillip Island, where we watched groups of small penguins return to their nests on shore after a day out in the ocean. They did not seem to be afraid of all the spectators and bright lights but as a protection for them, photography was strictly prohibited.

The presidents' meeting was held on the Friday and Claudia Fehrer was re-elected international president and Åsa Öhqvist was elected vice president. After the meeting, the country representatives attended a special dinner at a restaurant in Cowes. The restaurant was chosen not only due to its excellent food, but also because of its links to the world of motorsport and the walls were covered with photographs of race legends.

Our last rally activity was the parade which took us around Cowes and then onwards to Wonthaggi for lunch. As usual, the parade attracted attention – we were representing 13 countries, and our bikes were prepped accordingly with national flags and other symbols – there was even an inflatable kangaroo riding pillion.

During the rally we raised 256.20 AU\$ (about 170 euros) for Motorcycle Outreach, which was later donated to Pikilily in Tanzania.

It was hard to say goodbye and happy travels to everyone as they scattered themselves all over the country. Most of the international members were taking the opportunity to explore the country while here. I'd love to see them back here again!



2016 Hungary, Esztergom, 10-16 July



Report by Margaret Stewart, WIMA Australia: WIMA Hungary chose a town known for its history and beautiful architecture: Esztergom on the Danube River, bordering Slovakia. Because it was the capital in the 12th and 13th centuries and is still now the seat of the Roman Catholic

Church in Hungary, Esztergom has many beautiful and well-preserved buildings including a famous basilica and castle. And most important: good roads.

WIMA Hungary made travel easy for attendees, as the Australian National President (NP) Kathy O'Donnell explains: 'We had chatted with Emese Melicher, WIMA Hungary NP via Facebook messenger and arranged to leave the train at a small destination before Budapest. We were met at Tatabanya station by two WIMA members from Hungary. Such is the strength of the WIMA network: we didn't speak Hungarian and they spoke very little English, but we recognised each other by the WIMA T-shirts we were wearing!'

Rental bikes were delivered, and participants familiarised themselves with the roads and their bike by riding out to a nearby village. As members arrived, they were offered local schnapps. Tents went up everywhere. The weather was hot and sunny.

The welcome dinner was held that night amidst enormous noise from 250 voices in 14 languages. The mayor spoke and a Hungarian WIMA member translated. After dinner, a rockabilly band called the Prison Band opened the dance floor and later there was a disco.

Memorable meals included an ox on a spit, and more shots of a spirit that was described as rocket fuel by those new to it. The weather was hot, so the campground pool was usually full. During the week, the hosts organised a rally ride through the district. Riders set off with instructions and travelled through the countryside and small towns. It didn't matter if you got lost – the road and surroundings were charming and the ride an adventure. Another day was spent riding to and touring the capital Budapest. We also held a ceremony for fallen riders together with the police.



At night there were games such as a Hungarian version of pub soccer, which involves tying participants in place as they play. On the last night there was an auction and a lottery for the WIMA charity Pikilily and we raised about 700 euros altogether.

The local TV station was quite interested: they interviewed International President Claudia Fehrer, International Vice-President Åsa Öhqvist, Hungarian WIMA President Emese Melicher, and member Hajnalka Koncsek.

The parade took us into Budapest with the help of an impressive group of police motorcyclists. With flashing blue lights, they led our group of 200 riders uninterrupted into the Peace Square in Budapest. As our parade was in aid of the Pink Ribbon, we ended with a ceremonial meet with doctors from the cancer treatment hospital and a hand over of a cheque for 250,000 Forints (about 790 euros) on behalf of all of us.



2017 Estonia, Jäneda, 16-22 July



Report written by WIMA Estonia:
Estonia's first WIMA international rally hosted 196 participants from 14 countries. Of the guests, 75 were registered for the pre-rally which took place between the 14th and 16th of July.

The pre-rally, organised mainly by Kaija and Maris, was an important part of the Estonian rally and it took participants to Pärnu and on to Kihnu island. The participants used motorcycles, their own and borrowed, bus and rental cars to get to the island. The ferry between the port of Munalauu on the mainland and Kihnu island was too small to accommodate all the motorcycles, so a bus was rented as well.

On the island, participants had a sightseeing tour on the back of two open lorries, which in itself was quite exotic. Add to this, the sight of Kihnu women in their national dress – which they still wear every day – riding motorcycles which, instead of a sidecar, have a wooden box for freshly caught fish!



The next day, guests returned to Pärnu for a city tour and dinner and on the third day everyone was off to Jäneda, the official location of the Estonian rally.

The rally in Jäneda was officially opened the following day and lasted for a week. These were seven days packed with all



kinds of activities – a tour to Järva-Jaani Old Equipment Shelter, a bus tour to Tallinn Old Town, a treasure hunt in picturesque northern coast villages and manors, BMW motorcycle try-outs as well as off-road and track training. The parade went to the beautiful Rakvere Castle.



Evenings were spent together, and different activities were scheduled for each night. The most memorable of them being the opening dinner with folk dancing and a performance by Svjata Vatra (we still vividly remember the soloist playing trombone while standing on the table) and the performances of national teams (including WIMA Estonia's own ballet suite 'Limping Swans').

Also important for us was the seminar held together with Estonian female riders, organised as part of WIMA Estonia's annual 'Women's Day' events. We spoke about road safety and experiences regarding travelling on roads in various countries and different national presidents shared information about their countries.

In a nutshell – a wonderful week spent together with wonderful women... and it hardly rained, which is rare for the Estonian climate.

The Estonian rally got quite a lot of media coverage and glimpses of the parade were also shown on national television.

2018 Finland, Parainen, 30 July-4 August



WIMA Finland writes: We had chosen an excellent location for the 2018 international rally in Parainen. The lofty trees on the campsite provided shade during the very hot week in July, when women from all over the world gathered for an action-packed WIMA rally. The lake provided a very welcome opportunity to cool off and the party tent was open every

night providing beverages, music and other entertainment. This being Finland, of course there was a sauna on site! The heat stayed with us until the last day – only when we were packing up and saying our goodbyes, did it start to rain.

Barbara McEvoy from WIMA Australia said: We were allotted a lovely little chalet at the top of a very steep drive. From our spot on the top of the hill, we had a bird's eye view of the whole camp and I think someone said there were about 300 bikes of all makes, configurations and sizes parked throughout the grounds. The setting was right on the water with a little rocky beach and the girls made good use of the warm shallow water. Breakfast was supplied every morning – the eggs were all white shelled which we found odd, but the food was healthy and



there was plenty of it. For the week we sometimes organised a meal in the chalet, and if we were in Turku we ate out.

We took part in the treasure hunt, but I didn't win. At the main tent there were different craft workshops every day and there were lots of different competitions going on all week. We were also treated with a trip on a real restored steamboat in Helsinki, and although it was high summer in Finland it was quite a lot hotter than normal, and we had to retreat downstairs as we were in danger of getting sunburnt. Sounds like Aussie – a big surprise to us considering how close we were to the Arctic Circle. On the Saturday morning, all the bikes gathered and lined up for the parade through the streets of Helsinki. It was quite spectacular, and many people lined the streets to watch. Everyone gathered for a group photo on the wharf. A moment to remember.

Trui Hanouille from Belgium (also known as Elektrogirl) rode a new electric Zero DSR from Helsinki to the rally site and beyond, and says: Although the Zero makes almost no noise, as soon as I drive up, heads turn. Electric cars are now well-known, but electric motorcycles are not. When I plug in the power cable, the first curious questions arise: How far? How long to charge? How expensive? The news buzzes through the camp. Halfway through the week there was also a test day at the distributor in Turku where all interested could try either an electric motorcycle or an electric bicycle.

2019 Curaçao, Pietermaai, 21-27 April



Curaçao is a Dutch Caribbean island, famous for its beautiful beaches and coral reefs, which are rich in marine life. On Curaçao, people speak Dutch and Papiamentu, from which the word Dushi in the title of the rally originates. Dushi can mean many things from tasty (food), babe or darling (kids or adults), sweet or loving (in thanks), sexy (women or men!), nice or beautiful (eg Dushi Korsou - beautiful Curaçao).

Report written by Rita Koopmanschaap, President WIMA Curaçao: The Dushi WIMA rally was organised by WIMA Curaçao, at the request of at least 80 WIMA members, who were participants of earlier rallies. It took five years to prepare, investigating wishes and options, resulting in our invitation and no less than 96 participants came to the first ever WIMA Caribbean rally. The central location of hostel Bed & Bike offered everything WIMA needed, including push bikes and easy access to the cosy atmosphere of Pietermaai. This is an area in Willemstad, full of restaurants, close to the beach and the Ponton bridge, which crosses from the Punda to the Otrabanda on the other side of town.



The rally programme offered pre-rally happy hours and get-togethers, the opening dinner at the waterside restaurant Timeless, horseback riding and mountain-bike tours, workshops with cultural activities like headscarf folding, making souvenirs with recyclable materials, salsa dancing and percussion. We also had an evening ride out and a big street party with all the Curaçao bikers; an Island tour to highlights on the west side of the island 'Westpunt'; a parade with motorbikes, scooters, coach or rental

car; a scavenger hunt full of fun tasks; dinner at Chobolobo's (Blue Curaçao) museum with traditional Curaçao music (Tipiko) and local dancers; a boat trip to remote Playa Fuik and closing farewell party with a big Dushi WIMA cake and farewell. After the rally many had to return home, but quite a few participants stayed for the King's Day Ride and party, more snorkelling and diving or travelled home after exploring the wider Caribbean.



2019 England, Castleton, 11-17 August



Report by Val Newman, president WIMA GB at the time of the rally: Held in the heart of the Derbyshire Peak District, the rally venue was the Youth Hostels Association (YHA) at Losehill

Hall, in Castleton. The hostel was booked exclusively for WIMA for a whole week and accommodation was in twin, quad and dormitory style rooms, most ensuite, for 132 participants. The rest, 95, camped, either in the main or a separate quiet field. The main field had been very recently vacated by sheep, which astonished some participants! A total of 227 participants from 12 divisions attended and the YHA infrastructure and helpful staff helped to make the event run smoothly.

We had a hired marquee on site for the main events. The YHA staff prepared and served pre-ordered breakfasts, and



a café/bar in reception and an additional bar in the evening served snacks and drinks. Food for the opening and closing ceremonies, and the BBQ came from outside caterers, as the YHA could not offer the variety that we wanted.

The programme was varied. Guest speakers through the week were: Jim Freeman, Chair of the BMF, Anna Zee, president of FEMA, Tiffany Coates on personal safety for women adventurers, Hayley Bell, founder of Women Riders World Relay, and Linda Ashmore on riding skills. The talks were informative and entertaining.

Throughout the week, there was a challenge ride – places to ride to, and 'evidence' to collect, in the form of postcards, photos and information. There was an optional visit to the world-famous Blue John Caverns, which was very interesting. IAM RoadSmart (Institute of Advanced Motorcyclists) offered observed rides on a one-to-one basis, with feedback at the end. We were lucky to have an all-women team of experienced IAM observers and it was a great experience for our foreign visitors.

Our parade ride was to the huge stately home, Chatsworth House, a journey of 17 miles (27 km), and after the rally photo, there was an opportunity to visit the house and gardens. Chatsworth's first architect and owner in the 16th century was Bess of Hardwick, the second most powerful woman in England after Queen Elizabeth 1st.

The Chesterfield Garland Dancers were delightful. Jazz/swing quintet Hot Toddy opened the event at Monday's welcome dinner, Solar Entertainment provided the mid-week music, and Thor Gods of Rock closed the rally (along with most peoples' hearing!), at the farewell dinner - there was certainly something for everyone throughout the week.

Our raffle and auction raised £536 (588 euros) and a few pennies, which was shared equally between the Derbyshire Air Ambulance and MJ Piki – or Pikilily as it is known in WIMA.



2020 Germany, Wilnsdorf, 27 July-1 August – Cancelled



Report by Susi Metzner, president of WIMA Germany:

The Germans pulled out all the stops for what would have been a magnificent 70th anniversary celebration. A pre-rally was planned to be

held from 23-26 July, in a youth hostel located in the middle of Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord, which is part of the 'Industriekulturpfad' or 'Industrial Heritage Trail'. It is a very interesting area with a long industrial history in coal mining and steel production. It closed in 1985 and the facilities were remodelled as cultural institutions. Planned activities were going to include a guided tour of the site plus optional events such as a torchlight tour, geocaching and a high rope climbing parkour.

The main international WIMA rally would have been held in the grounds of the Siegerland YMCA in Wilnsdorf, in the southwest of North Rhine-Westphalia. This region is famous for its beautiful landscapes, dark forests, and huge river and lake dams. As usual, there would have been joint rides, games, a disco, a live band, a campfire, a parade and two dinner evenings. Apart from the 140 beds in the youth hostel, we could have occupied the whole youth hostel area with our tents and the gymnasium was ready as a recreation room. We had 380 entries from 15 countries so this rally would have been one of the biggest international WIMA rallies ever.

Unfortunately, as the global Covid-19 pandemic unfolded in the early part of 2020, it became apparent that we might have to cancel, so we did not collect any money in advance from the international members. At times, we had several 'alternative plans' for a slimmed-down version of the rally, but in the end we decided to urge the authorities to ban the rally, as many of the international participants would not have been allowed to leave their countries or even enter Germany and a 'cost-covering' rally would no longer have been possible. Thanks to the official



ban, we were able to invoke 'force majeure' and got out of the situation with virtually no major losses. It was extremely unpleasant for me personally that my first international 'action' as the new president of WIMA Germany was, of all things, the cancellation of a rally. (This was the first cancellation since 1962 when most members were pregnant or breastfeeding). This was not how I had imagined taking over from Verena. I felt so sorry for the entire organisation team. They had organised everything for years and then a virus comes along and ruins everything. Unimaginable until then.



2021 The Netherlands, Grolloo, 2-7 August - Cancelled



Report written by Sandra Ilbrink, president of WIMA Netherlands:

The preparations for the international rally 2021 were special and exciting as it was the 40th anniversary of WIMA Netherlands. But unfortunately, after three years of preparation, we had to cancel the rally three weeks in advance due to Covid-19 restrictions.

However, an 'alternative motorbike week' took place in Grolloo after all, organised by the owner of the accommodation. It turned out to be a very nice week and the weather co-operated well. Both the Dutch and some visiting foreigners were pleased that this alternative was available.

There were 45 participants in total, 25 Dutch and 20 foreigners, from eight divisions: Austria, Curaçao, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Switzerland. Some of them were there the whole week, others part of the week and because it was a relatively small group it was easy to socialise.



We gratefully used the routes that had already been prepared and apart from motorcycling, we swam, did sports, shopped at Motoport and sampled some culture. At the campsite there was a campfire every evening with music and singing. There were also three evenings of dinner together.

It was a lovely week and so nice to still be able to gather in this Covid-19 period after going through all the preparations for the rally.



2022 Switzerland, Melchtal, 3-9 July



After two years of cancelled rallies the long-awaited reunion took place in the heart of Switzerland, near the Alpine massif, with its endless curves through five cantons and the passes Grimsel, Nufenen, Furka, Gotthard and Susten.

Eva Streuli, president of WIMA Switzerland, wrote about the rally for

the WIMA International newsletter: At the beginning of July, we welcomed 250 enthusiastic female motorcyclists for a week in Melchtal, Switzerland. After a two-year Covid-related WIMA break, we had the privilege to hold our rally. Melchtal, nestled between mountains and lakes, is a wonderfully located sports camp, which became our home for the next few days.

The joy was huge to see all the people again! 16 nations united, just wonderful!

The weather cooperated, the excursion with post bus and ship had everyone excited.

The rally ride over winding passes and idyllic landscapes required riding skills and concentration. The afternoon of games was typically Swiss with milking cows, spitting Chriesstei (cherry stones) and others.

The marquee, where all the speeches, greetings, welcome and farewell dinners and breakfasts took place, was lively and many women had wonderful conversations. The bar was always well-attended, the beer and cider were flowing generously, and it was just nice to experience the great atmosphere.

We had the pleasure to welcome a very special guest: Alena, president of WIMA Ukraine, who made it to Switzerland despite the adverse circumstances.

Other special guests were two women from Iceland and now WIMA Iceland has been founded! Nor, ex-president of WIMA Malaysia also visited for a short time as did Christina Vera and Nikita from Chile.

It was a beautiful, peaceful, happy and cool WIMA.

From the rally programme: The programme of activities for the week started with Monday night's welcome evening and there was plenty of free time during the week to enjoy the alpine roads. On the Tuesday, an organised trip to Luzern was offered. Then the rally ride on Wednesday where teams were challenged at various checkpoints to complete games such as throwing chocolate bars and a time trial carrying ping-pong balls on a plate, to earn points.

Ann Weir, WIMA GB member from Wales, recalls the parade ride and farewell evening: Thursday was the day of the parade where we had the opportunity of flying our national flags on an escorted tour to a place of interest. In the past, this has been the local town square to meet the mayor/burgomaster for a little ceremony but not today; we were taken to a lake for a swim! Well, if you remembered your swimming cossie that is – but some of us managed by taking off our boots and socks, rolling up our trousers and settling for a paddle.



At Friday's farewell evening, after a few speeches, the 250 of us tucked into our last supper, followed by a bit of prize giving from the tour and silly games, and what'ya know? I got one too for being the oldest participant who had ridden there.

Alena, the Ukrainian WIMA president, had even turned up for the supper and had placed on everyone's place mat a jigsaw piece which read 'Hugs from Ukraine'.

2023 France, Parc National des Ecrins, 3-7 July

Report by Marie Delestré and Chantal Hertrich, WIMA France.

France had offered to organise the 2023 rally and despite the difficulties of not having a president and several of the committee having resigned, some of us still decided to do this rally.



This rally was the fifth one organised by WIMA France. Three of us had organised the 1990 rally (Marie-Ange, Véronique and Chantal). In 2023, two of us from this rally were still here, Véronique and Chantal, and we were joined by Violette and Marie (committee secretary at the time).

Sunday afternoon, arrival of the organising team and volunteers at the Holiday Centre which hosts the Rally. We find the place, and we start with a meeting to define the responsibilities of each person. Installation and removal of the equipment provided. We meet volunteer members and after the meal, we prepare the bags with goodies and gifts.

Very early Monday morning, breakfast. Marquee is installed. It takes up a lot of space. All the team get to work marking the parking lots for motorcycles, cars, camping pitches, putting numbers on the room doors, setting up the reception desk... and already, the first participants are arriving! We direct them to the parking lots, then guide them to their rooms or the campsite; some have ordered brunch. Reunions at WIMA are always a great occasion. Women are coming from everywhere!

During this time a team of volunteers takes care of the decoration, installation of the sound system in the marquee



which will be used for welcome and farewell meals, breakfasts, conferences, etc. A busy day, tiring for the whole team, but what a joy to welcome our friends from all over the world! A delicious aperitif will bring together the participants before the welcome meal, which of course begins with the rally song, 'Douce France' by Charles Trenet.

The next few days will be very busy, with various visits, motorbike rides on the roads of the Hautes-Alpes, relaxing by the swimming pool... The region is beautiful, and the neighbouring passes are calling for lovers of bends to ride them. Volunteers also take advantage of this calm to visit the surrounding area by motorbike, others rest. The four organisers remain in the centre, to answer any questions, and there are always things to do.

Tuesday at the beginning of the afternoon, Marie, Fabienne and Dominique leave to check the route of the Thursday parade. Tuesday evening, Trash Night is a great success. Several countries have come up with good ideas to entertain the participants.





On Wednesday, it's the visit to the distillery in the village that produces *génépi*, the local alcohol. This delights everyone - because there is also a tasting! There are also suggestions for walks in the surrounding passes, watercolour workshops, travel stories, hikes, etc., all of which will brighten up your stay.

Thursday morning the parade takes place, after instructions by the FFM (Fédération Française des Motards en Colère) which ensures security. All the motorbikes start, and we set off for 23 km on pretty roads, to arrive at the edge of Lake Orcières with the Alps in the background.

What a great moment! Cold drinks, group photos, picnic, swimming... a very beautiful day in the sun which ends with the last evening of the rally. A magnificent aperitif to the sound of a jazz orchestra begins, and there is the farewell meal, with regional specialities and a magnificent cake, the awards ceremony, gifts, presentation of the rally 2024, and the presentation of the Ellen Pfeiffer award. This year, the recipient is Margrit Podesser, from Switzerland, WIMA member for



almost 50 years, and one of the founders of WIMA Switzerland. A beautiful evening, which closes this rally!

On Friday, the motorbikes are loaded, and the participants leave for their home country, for a vacation in France, or elsewhere. We will see each other again in Romania. And it's a parting of the ways for the French women: with lots of beautiful memories, exchanges, and for the four organisers the feeling of having succeeded with a small team, but smiling, efficient and dedicated, for the pleasure of all the participants.

2024 Romania, Transilvania, 19-24 August

Report by Mihaela Hodivoianu, WIMA Romania NP.
Photos by Cristina Constantinescu, WIMA Romania.



'Back to the roots of childhood' was the motto of the rally hosted by the Romanian division. The event was an invitation to innocence, the excitement of reuniting with dear friends and the joy of living the moment with all your heart.

255 women bikers from 24 countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) met in the Șăulia (Mures) camp for a week of activities, dancing and good times. The camp was buzzing with music and laughter from morning 'til morning. We collected lots of stories, but perhaps the most interesting was that we taught Olten Serbs to WIMA members from all over the world, and they loved it. Who knew traditional dances could be such an international hit?

Preparations started four days in advance and it was a real show! We packed parcels, marked the car park like real artists, turned the campsite into a motorhome dream, and painted over 20 signs - some useful, some just for fun. The organising team was so enthusiastic that the participants who arrived early wanted to join in, and were more than happy to do so. No-one escaped paint or scratches on their hands, but everyone had smiles on their faces!

The first day was all about exciting reunions and new friendships. The venue captured everyone's hearts from the first moment and the music from the speakers created the perfect atmosphere. The organising team worked flawlessly - the WIMAs were welcomed with open arms, dropped off their

luggage and lined up their bikes in the specially arranged car park. The participation package was a real success, with a cloth blouse embroidered with national motifs and the event logo, a metallic glass, sweets, non-alcoholic beer and a lavender bouquet, all nicely packed in a reflective backpack. The evening ended with disco fun with DJ ICSU, providing a perfect end to a day full of activities and excitement.



The second day started in an atmosphere of zen and relaxation. Nothing says 'good morning' better than a little stretching and a divine massage! Participants beat the heat with water games - who would have thought a water balloon fight could be so competitive? A nice tradition was the exchange of gifts between participants. Workshops and presentations were not missing from the programme, offering valuable lessons on how to tour with elegance and safety. The evening ended spectacularly with a bonfire, disco on the lake and a film night - something for all tastes! Who knew we could turn a lake into a disco?



The third day started with the most anticipated event - the motorbike parade! The participants started the day with the excitement of the parade, the highlight of the international



gathering. The speciality coffee, present in the camp, was the perfect fuel to awaken our adventurous spirit after the previous days of partying. By 10.30 am we were ready to go, lined up by country and proudly wearing the insignia of the participating divisions, and paraded the approximately 70 km to the Transylvania Motor Ring. With smiles on our faces, waving flags and waving left and right to the children and pedestrians on the road, we arrived at the circuit, where we were treated to a triumphant entry! The exhilaration of arriving at the ring in a line of motorbikes for miles is indescribable. The joy was even greater as we enjoyed three laps of the circuit in heats of 20 participants. We returned to camp with the satisfaction of a memorable experience.



WIMA International rally!!! And, of course, one last get-together on the meadow over a glass of prosecco - because nothing says 'goodbye' better than bubbles of prosecco and laughter under the moonlight.

Finally, a few testimonials, for nothing can be more authentic than the impressions of those who took part.

Despite – or perhaps because of – a tragic event at the beginning, the atmosphere at the rally was truly exceptional. The venue was fantastic, and the surrounding landscape was breathtaking. Moreover, the journey to and from the rally allowed us to appreciate the beauty and diversity of Romania. The program during the rally week in August was full of activities, thanks to both the external providers and the dedicated efforts of the WIMA Romania members. The nightly disco events were another highlight, and the 'Trash Evening' was simply unforgettable! It's a shame the week eventually came to an end, and we had to head back home (Chris, Austria)

A first international rally for me, and what a human adventure! The pleasure of catching up with girlfriends and meeting new people. It's about discovering yourself by getting out of your comfort zone and pushing your limits to meet all these women who share the same passion for motorcycling. Let's do it again next year in Germany! (Mireille, France)

My mind keeps going back to Romania to those crazy evenings and hot sunny days. I am now thinking how sorry I would be if I had missed this WIMA rally. I admire you, your WIMA Romania team, I am happy to be a part of it. (Yurga, Lithuania)

Romania is beautiful in the morning with soft blankets of birds hovering over the fields. Men in straw hats stand by the milk ramp, and there is a smell of wood burning and freshly baked bread. Happy cows wander freely across the meadows, and sheep cross the tracks along with rapid dogs and shepherds. We have swung our way through Transalpinia, laughed heartily at Trash Night, and met strong, beautiful women and sweet men. Thank you, WIMA Romania. It has been an adventure. Next year, it's Germany. We'll be there! (Eli, Norway)



The penultimate day came with games, good cheer and new things learnt! Starting with yoga at the pontoon and ending with dancing at the disco on the other pontoon, the day was very fruitful: first aid course given by SMURD TG Mureş, workshops on motorbike riding safety and improvement, and games of skill and precision. The day ended with a long-standing international rally tradition - Trash Night! A fun evening of songs, memories, skits, skits, skits and costumes. Vampires and witches by the preparation, talent and dedication of the participants.



Last day and nobody wanted to think about leaving yet! There was so much to do! Yoga in the morning, a delicious breakfast and the restaurant adorned with flags of all the nations that have a WIMA division... all made us think we were going to miss each other. Then came the Via Transilvanica storytelling sessions and the nomadic life on a motorbike presented by our very own Luiza - who knew you could live out of a backpack and still always have a battery in your phone? The gala evening was full of firsts, a farewell speech and the long-awaited surprise: the unveiling of the location for the next



2024 Australia, Bacchus Marsh, 29 Sept-5 October

Report by Lee Skinner with additional information by Kathy O'Donnell, WIMA Australia. Photos by Angie Trevaskis, WIMA Australia and Michelle Lamphere, WIMA USA.

We had so much fun at our international rally in 2015 that we decided to do it again. 2024 marked the 40th anniversary of WIMA Australia.

Our priority was to check out some possible rally sites. Some suggested places were in Tasmania, and Cape Bridgewater in western Victoria, and at the next AGM we discussed these sites and more options were suggested. We conducted a survey so that all our members could decide.

The site at Lady Northcote Discovery Park at Bacchus Marsh (Bacchus is the Roman god of wine and revelry, which seemed appropriate) offered very good value and we had stayed there in the past. The survey of members showed that they also thought that it was a good site for our AIWR24.



Our programme included a Welcome to Country (conducted by a local Aboriginal Elder), our version of a gymkhana which was a collection of games, Trash Night, a talk from Linda Boothe-stone, organised rides (including the iconic Great Ocean Road and central Victoria), the National Presidents' meeting and the fund-raising auction for Pikilily.

'Welcome to Country' is a ceremony undertaken by Aboriginal traditional custodians to acknowledge and welcome visitors to their ancestral lands. It is intended to highlight the cultural significance of the surrounding area to the descendants of a particular language group or clan who are recognised as the original human inhabitants of the area.

The usual features of all internationals were also included, the welcome and farewell dinners, the parade which went to nearby Ballarat (regional city) and which culminated at Lake Wendouree with the mandatory group photograph (despite it blowing a gale at the time).

We had just over 50 people attend, with a few late casual (one day only) registrations, and a total of five men accompanying their partners, 'braving' the silly antics of an international gathering of women.





We had a couple of 'whoopsies'. One on the first night going into the site after dark, which resulted with a late-night trip to the nearby emergency room with a broken collarbone, and one later in the week with a mishap in a gravel car park which resulted in a lower leg injury, which also ended up in a nearby emergency room. Thankfully, in Australia we have universal health care, so both of our visitors had their costs covered.

The guys in the band were a big hit on 'music night' and as expected, Nutbush continued to get people up off their chairs and on the dance floor. Disco lighting and illuminated tutus brought some colour to the dance floor, and even the large kangaroo mascot got to show its moves. It was a fun night.

This event would never have been achieved without the collective generosity of many of the Australian members. The list is exhaustive, but includes the bus, blankets, pillows, goody bags and all the contents, the hats and water bottles, the Welcome to Country ceremony, the table flags... the list goes on and on. We even had first-class IT support from Jakub Baranski, with our ride day plans...

We also asked our visitors to donate small items for the Pikilily fund-raising auction and were stunned by the collective generosity. Not only did they donate, but they also purchased, raising the astounding amount of 1298 AU\$ (about 809 euros).



It was truly wonderful to see so many people reach deep into their own pockets to help others... Truly a WIMA ethos.

A sad, but happy, farewell on the last day after a 'few' bevvies were sunk in the dongas on the last night. Someone suggested that they couldn't take the grog with them, so it 'had to be disposed of'... another WIMA ethos?



WIMA songs from Rallies through the years

Songs have been sung at the WIMA rallies since the early days. Some were written originally for WIMA, some adapted and/or translated. While some songs have had a recurring presence, others have just been temporary, for example as a performance at the Trash Night. As Frances Popley writes in the original history booklet: 'No account of the activities of the Continental division would be complete without at least a brief mention of the WIMA song'. The Continental division was the way divisions overseas from America were referred to at the time. Now songs are sung at rallies all over the world, here we have collected as many as we could. Members who know more songs are invited to get in touch.

The following song was written by Agnès Acker for the annual rally in France in 1974 and first sung on the last night of the rally at the prize giving. Frances Popley commented 'The words of the song are often to be heard on the camp site at the Continental rally. They are not intended to be taken seriously but simply as an adjunct to the happy carefree atmosphere that typifies the rally scene.'

WIMA SONG

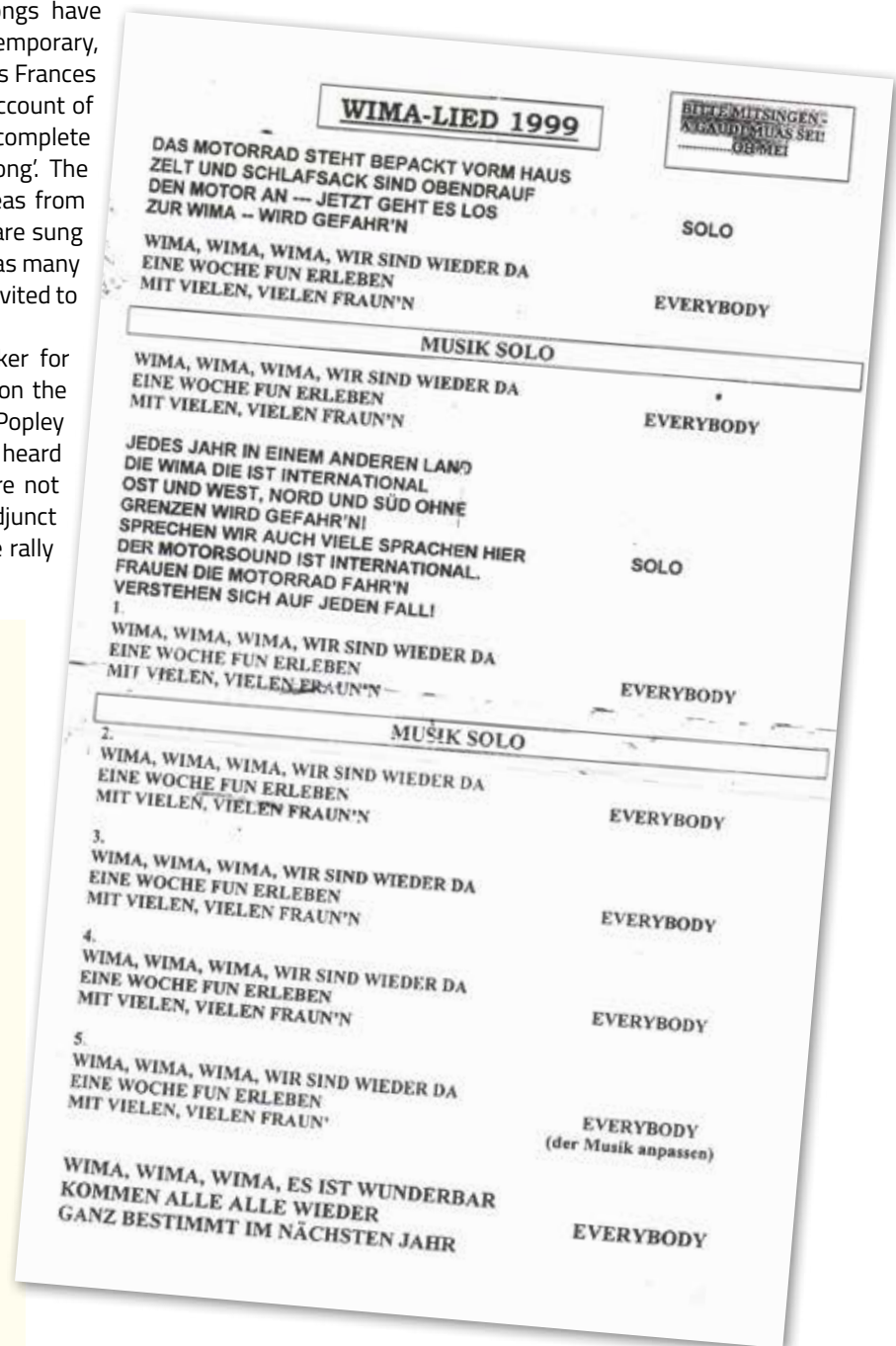
*La WIMA c'est une terrible association
Rassemblant des filles de tous les horizons
Demoiselles brunes sur Yamaha
Demoiselles blondes sur Pannonia
A moto pas de danger que je m'ennuie
Peu de frein, mais beaucoup gaz et vas-y
La griserie des virages
La bagarre quand il pleut.*

*Ma Suzuki pleine de fougue et d'ardeur
Rugissante étincelante ma Honda
BMW d'acier et de douceur
MZ Jawa de mon coeur
Quand un homme contre lui me serre fort
Me disant comme Tarzan 'Je suis très fort'
Moi je lui demande innocemment
'Sauvais-tu changer un segment?'*

*A ROUGH TRANSLATION
WIMA is a terrific Association
Gathering girls of different backgrounds
Brunettes on Yamahas
Blondes on Pannonias
On a motorbike boredom is kept at bay
A little braking, a lot of throttle and let's go
The headiness of bends
The fight when it rains.*

*My Suzuki full of vigour and passion
Roaring and scintillating is my Honda
BMW of steel and gentleness
MZ and Jawa are my loves
When a man holds me close against him
Saying, like Tarzan 'I am very strong',
Innocently I ask him 'Can you change a
piston ring?'*

WIMA Lied 1999, from Verena Reindl, former president of WIMA Germany.



At the international rally in GB in 2003 a song inspired by both drinking and a popular children's song was composed. *Lu Travers* wrote for the GB national newsletter: 'The song was so addictive that us Wessex lot haven't been able to stop singing it each time we meet up.'

It was sung to the tune of The Dinosaur Song (a nursery rhyme for days of the week and counting) and written by Zoe Jeffryes and a few of the GB crowd at the international rally. (The rally was held close to the Jurassic coast and dinosaurs are a big thing in this area!)

2003 Dorset song

On Sunday one dinosaur came to me and said.....we need 2 large barrels of IPA, 2 small barrels of IPA, 396 cans of Stella, 240 cans of Fosters, 240 cans of Blackthorn, 120 cans of Coke, 120 cans of diet Coke, 24 bottles of good red, 24 bottles of cheap red and 24 bottles of white as well as 96 cans of Woodpecker, 96 cans of Tango and 96 cans of 7 Up. We played and played all day, and then we drank away, say goodbye dinosaurs, say goodbye dinosaurs.

On Monday two dinosaurs came to me and said... we need two more cases of good red and a couple more large barrels of IPA. We played and played all day, and then we drank away, say goodbye dinosaurs, say goodbye dinosaurs.

On Tuesday three dinosaurs came to me and said... we need another 3 cases of good red, one and a half barrels of beer and a case of white. We played and played all day, and then we drank away, say goodbye dinosaurs, say goodbye dinosaurs.

On Wednesday four dinosaurs came to me and said... we need four cases of good red please. We played and played all day, and then we drank away, say goodbye dinosaurs, say goodbye dinosaurs.

On Thursday five dinosaurs came to me and said... shit we've drunk the bar dry... we need a case of white, 2 cases of good red, 6 crates of Stella, 1 and a half barrels of beer and a packet of crisps please!! We played and played all day, and then we drank away, say goodbye dinosaurs, say goodbye dinosaurs.

On Friday six dinosaurs came to me and said... we need 2 cases of Coke and 192 cans of Stella please oh and can you put back 72 cans of Blackthorn and 24 diet Cokes, they're not strong enough for big, big bodies and tiny little heads. We played and played all day, and then we drank away, say goodbye dinosaurs, say goodbye dinosaurs.

On Saturday seven dinosaurs came to me and said... we've got great big bodies and... (wait for it)... bloody sore heads!!!!

At the rally in The Netherlands 2004 we were in for a surprise. A group of women came disguised as members of the new WIMA division Fürstentum Liechtenstein and performed the song WIMA Queen.



WIMA Queen – ABBA

*You've a bike, you can drive
Having the time of your life
See these girls, watch that scene
Dig in the WIMA Queen
Friday night and we're driving slow
We're so glad we found Borculo
We have no GPS
and driving in our dress
Gave us a little stress
Very upset having a flat tire
Then one of the exhausts caught fire
Driving over a crossing, without a functioning brake,
Baby, we got the shake
But we were on our way
To see the the WIMA Queens
Born to ride and to party here
WIMA Queen,
Greatest bikester we've ever seen
You've a bike, you can drive
Having the time of your life
See these girls, watch that scene
Dig in the WIMA Queen
We know we are 4 days late
And we're in an outrageous state
We had to put on make-up, and had to do our hair
But now we are finally there
And so we meet you here
You are the WIMA Queens
Born to ride and to party here
WIMA Queens,
Greatest bikester we've ever seen
You've a bike, you can drive
Having the time of your life
See these girls, watch that scene
Dig in the WIMA Queen*

Following the WIMA Netherlands rally in Markelo 2010 Annette Johann, Motorrad Magazine, wrote: "Elsbeth, sing La Paloma again!" With her tiny ukulele, the Swiss hobby cabaret artist smoothly manages to turn Edith Piaf into the vastness of seafaring. Almost a hundred metres further, Irmgard 'Floh' Petit turns to the other side in her sleeping bag, sighing. Already for the third time "La Paloma". But she knows that any resistance is futile. When the WIMAs sing, they sing. No matter what, no matter how loud and always long. "Sailor's bride is the sea!" The WIMA party is in full swing. 2.30 am. Fat rain clouds are brewing over the approximately 200 tents and motorcycles on a meadow in Markelo, Holland. Annual meeting of the Women's International Motorcycle Association (WIMA). Exactly 60 years after the American Louise Scherbyn united the first female motorcyclists in the USA:

Campfire singing is a re-occurring feature at rallies but singing can occur at any time, especially in the party tent. 'Flee fly flow' is a song that has been sung at many rallies on the initiative of Berry Keller, former national president of WIMA Sweden. The procedure is that Berry sings first and then the everyone else repeats, line by line and it goes faster and faster. Initially, many thought that it was a Swedish language song, but it is not any known language, but a tongue-twister fun song.

Flee fly flow

Flee
Flee fly
Flee fly flow
Vista
Comela di comela di comela di vista
No no no no no di vista
Ini mini desti mini oh oh oh abi mini
Ich ibli oten boten bobo boana boten
Flee
Flee fly
(And so on)



WIMA Sweden had their own song compiled, back in the old days. As far as we know it was only sung nationally. Here translated from Swedish by Åsa Öhqvist: 'The original plays fast and loose with the Swedish grammar so I have kept this quirkiness, however the rhymes were lost in translation. 'Jopp hej di...' is a nonsense chant'.

WIMA's song

We all now sing as we should - jopp hej di, jopp hej da
so it is heard in WIMA's choir - jopp hej di, jopp hej da
The motorcycle belongs to us,
and with it we set off.
Jopp hej di, hej di hej da
jopp hej di, jopp hej da
jopp hej di hej di hej da
hej di, hej da

To nature we ourselves take,
and on the road we go.
Our colours pink/black,
are calling us to start.

To our bike our trust stands,
to it we dedicate most efforts.
The whole world is our goal,
yes, this shows us our symbol.

Returning our gaze to the international rallies, **at the Swiss rally in 2013** we were seen off by this song:

We say goodbye, auf wiedersehn

Wir sind WIMAs und wir kommen von der grossen weiten Welt
DAS IST SCHÖN, DAS MACHT SCHÖN
We are WIMAs and we're coming from around the big nice world
THIS IS GREAT, REALLY GREAT
LA LA LA.....

Wir lieben Kurven, Wein und Bier darum sind wir alle hier
DAS IST SCHÖN, DAS MACHT SCHÖN
We love riding on the bikes with the wind on our sides
THIS IS GREAT, REALLY GREAT
LA LA LA.....

Gute Reise wünschen wir, allen Frauen danken wir
NUN GEHT'S LOS, AUF NACH HAUS
We wish you a lucky trip, just take care we hope you're fit
WE SAY GOODBYE, AUF WIEDERSEHN

At the rally in Hungary 2016 we have a contemporary edition of a traditional British song performed at the Trash Night. This was led by June Douglass and assisted by a multinational group of women who each sang the song in their own translated version. Sadly, these translations were not kept.

We're climbing up to sunshine mountain where the cold wind blows
'puff puff puff'
We're climbing up to sunshine mountain cheeks a glow
Turn around your sorrows and hold your head up high
SO we're climbing up to sunshine mountain You and I, You and I.

At the rally in Finland 2018 June Douglass contributed with this song specially written for this rally.

WIMA aha

We are here for WIMA aha
We come on Hondas and BMAs aha
Yes, we are here for WIMA

The rally this year is in 'Sooarmi'
And we're gonna have one hell of a party
We come from 'Nihon, Deutschland and Schweiz'
And our members are very nice

WIMA aha
We are here for WIMA aha
We come on Suzukis and BMAs aha
Yes, we are here for WIMA

Sweden, Nederlands, Curaçao, France
Australia with their kangaroo dance
'Ro mon ee, Bulgaria, Air stee'
Austria 'yodel lodel odell ay eee'

WIMA aha
We are here for WIMA aha
We come on Hondas and BMAs aha
(but I came on a Jet A DC10)

The rally this year is in 'Sooarmi'
And we're gonna have one hell of a party
Great Britain and the US of A
Everybody 'have a nice day' 'ya all'

WIMA aha
We are here for WIMA aha
We come on Hondas and BMAs aha
Yes, we are here for WIMA rally

For the 2019 rally in Castleton, England, we stayed at Losehill Hall and camped on the adjoining area where sheep usually grazed. The occurrence of sheep poo amused some visitors and evidently spurred the creativity too. This award-winning song was the result:

At the rally in Switzerland 2022, we could finally meet again after two long years of Covid-19 crisis and two cancelled international rallies. Uli Sturm wrote this song for the rally which reflects the happiness of finally meeting our WIMA sisters from all over the world.

Welcome riders!

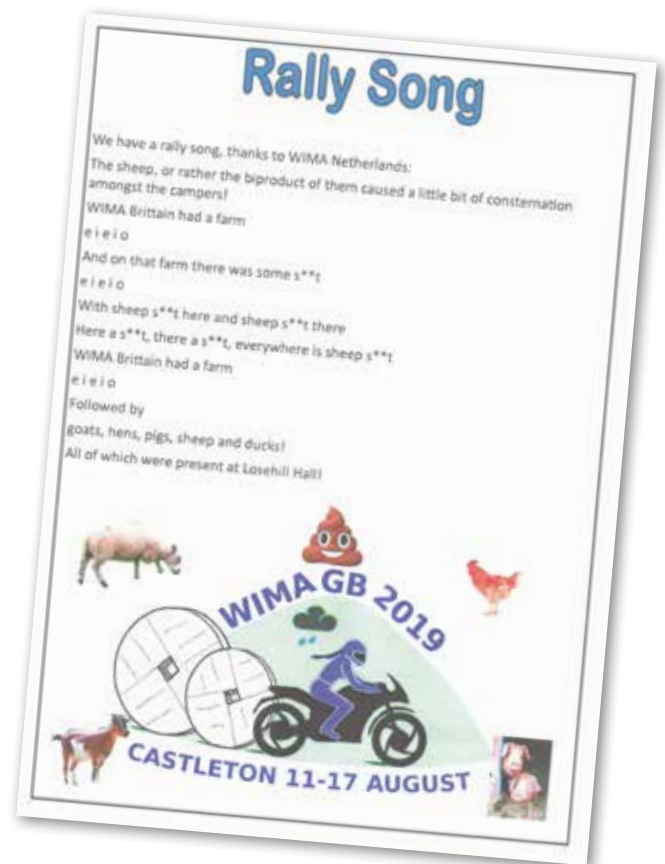
*Have a great time in Switzerland!
WIMA Melchtal,
be a part of the family!
Great talks, short nights,
crazy games in the afternoon.
Here in Melchtal,
feel that WIMA spirit soon!
Jodeladi hi...*

*WIMA Rallies,
missed you so,
two years No.
Happy together again.*

*We come from different nations,
from all around the globe.
So riding is our passion,
it is a kind of dope.
We love to ride the passroads
and our motorcycle speed
Our recipe for happiness
and that's all what we need.*

*Welcome riders!
Have a great time in Switzerland!
WIMA Melchtal,
be a part of the family!
Great talks, short nights,
crazy games in the afternoon.
Here in Melchtal,
feel that WIMA spirit soon!
Jodeladi hi...*

*WIMA Rallies,
missed you so,
two years No.
Happy together again.*



In France 2023, Uli Sturm once again contributed with a song, this time a 'boot dance':

*You don't like Germans, did some people say,
but I feel welcome, it's just a cliché.
I shouldn't think what other people are thinking,
but what you hear is almost not the best
These boots not made for walkin',
look always for your fuel,
'cause if your tank is empty,
it might be a little cruel.*

*Ya
I like beer and you prefer French wine,
Maybe if we share, it will be fine,
if I'm choosing I can't even losing,
There is no wrong and there is no right,
Yet,
These boots not made for walkin'
look always for your fuel,
'cause if your tank is empty,
it might be a little cruel.*

*I like riding, you like riding too
So WIMA is the best what we can do
(Ha)
Amazing week and I'm feeling great now
(Yeah)
Thank you, friends for things you cannot buy!
(Yeah)*

*These boots not made for walkin'
look always for your fuel,
'cause if your tank is empty,
it might be a little cruel.
Are you ready boots? Start dancing!*

WIMA International Officers

CURRENT OFFICERS

Zara Strange, International President since 2020, International Vice President from 2017-2020, International Merchandise Officer from 2012-2014



Back in 2017, at the WIMA Estonia international rally, a very close friend of mine tried to persuade me to apply for an international committee role and use my management and organisational experience to help improve accountability and transparency within the WIMA organisation. My initial reaction was that I was having too much fun just enjoying the WIMA international family with no responsibility to anyone apart from myself and my loyalty to WIMA GB, whose membership was my access to all of these wonderful new experiences. Her suggestion though stayed with me all the way home and so, when a call was put out for volunteers for the newly vacant international vice president role, I decided to put my name forward and was appointed in October of that year.

After three years I felt that I had successfully completed my goals and was preparing to step down but did put forward a proposal to help improve support for national divisions and individual members - to encourage members to experience the international aspect of their membership and to share those experiences with other members both in their own national division and our new divisions who had joined in the wake of WRWR. I offered to support anyone who was willing to take on the challenge as I saw a need for a younger person than myself to lead WIMA International. The national presidents agreed with my plan but disagreed with my view about age and appointed me international president in October 2020.

In 2018, I had decided that wherever and whenever possible, I would ride my bike to visit as many divisions as I could, to speak with national presidents and members to chat about

what they wanted from WIMA and for me to get a feel for their country and any particular problems that they were facing.

Living in Scotland at the time, each visit was a new adventure for me but I managed to meet with newer WIMAs France, Luxembourg, Greece and Romania. Unfortunately when I visited Bulgaria, Violeta was on her round world trip and my visit to Lithuania was cancelled when I was in Warsaw, by the then national president due to her ill health, but I have travelled through and stayed in Lithuania several times and Bulgaria the once. My travels through Italy to Sicily were before WIMA Italy joined. I still have Norway and Liechtenstein on my list to visit before my five-year term of office ends in September 2025. In November 2024 I ventured beyond Europe on my motorcycle to meet with WIMA Morocco on their amazing Atlas Mountains weekend rally.

Contact with members is important to me, with WIMA International rallies being an important source of information, requests and advice from ordinary members – as well as national presidents at face-to-face meetings.

Since 2020, we have seen the introduction of support loans for national divisions to develop their division and grants for individual members to attend an international rally that they would not otherwise have been able to afford. We have seen a growth in divisions inviting members from other countries to join them at their events and the numbers of WIMA members increasing even though the number of divisions remains fairly static, no matter how hard we try to encourage people to join us.

WIMA International officers are now recognised for their service with special pin badges made by WIMA Japan and succession plans have been introduced to help ensure continuity of officers, including the international president and vice president. In 2024 we introduced three regional officers for Americas & Australasia, Asia & Africa and Europe, not as an additional layer of management but as support for national presidents, their management committees and members, especially for those divisions who find attending international events difficult. The regional officers will promote their regions, including organising regional events.

The future of WIMA is looking good so, as we celebrate 75 years since Louise Scherbyn established WIMA, we can look forward with confidence to the next 75 years. Even if the internal combustion engine is to be relegated to history, the joy of riding on two-wheels and sharing experiences with other women interested in motorcycling will remain with us. (2025)

Mihaela Hodoivanu, International Vice President since 2020

In 2020 I was nominated for the international vice president position and I was extremely honoured to be elected. Coming from an Eastern European country with a young motorcycle culture and being in WIMA for only three years, it sounded like a big challenge. And it was - but at the same time extremely



rewarding because I got to work with an international team of extraordinary women. I got more connected with what is going on at an international level and gained a deeper understanding of what a community of this size can bring in terms of women's support, rights and development.

My role consists of assisting the international president in ensuring that WIMA continues to thrive as a cohesive organisation. I am involved in the entire process of attracting new divisions, assisting with the preparation of their application and guiding them to establish a strong national division. I prepare and circulate all documents related to WIMA's annual meetings of the International Council of National Presidents. I am available for any support required and happy to assist in every matter related to women's support and empowerment activities. I help with social media, and I collect materials for the quarterly newsletters of WIMA International. I was responsible for the WIMA Ukraine fundraising due to the war situation. I often speak about the great community that we are, both in Romanian and in international channels that have an interest in promoting us. (2023)

Maura Raniecka, International Treasurer since 2024, Public Relations Officer from 2011-2017



Back in 2004 I bought my first bike Suzuki GS500E and felt that mix of fear and excitement as I revved the engine for the

first time. Every ride, no matter how short, made me feel more alive, more connected to the world around me. But there was something missing. I wanted more than just personal freedom; I wanted to be part of a community, to connect with like-minded women who understood what it meant to chase that open road, to live boldly, and to take on challenges that seemed impossible.

That's when I stumbled upon the WIMA. It was like I had found my tribe, a group of women who shared the same fire, the same longing for adventure and empowerment. I had to be part of that movement. So in 2010, together with my riding girlfriends, we took the leap and joined WIMA during the WIMA International rally in Japan in 2010.

Since Japan, I did attend rallies in Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, Estonia, and Australia. I also had a great pleasure to organise a rally in Poland in 2014 and host almost 250 participants.

It wasn't long before I found myself drawn deeper into WIMA, knowing that if I truly wanted to make a difference - I needed to help shape its future. That's when I stepped up to the role of international PR officer. For several years, I worked to build WIMA's visibility. It was an incredible journey, filled with challenges, but also immense pride.

But the journey didn't stop there. Last year, I took on a new challenge - the role of international treasurer. Managing the finances for an international organisation of this scale comes with its own set of hurdles, but it also means being entrusted with the financial health and sustainability of something that has brought so many women together. It's about ensuring that every euro, is used to empower our riders, create opportunities for growth, and keep the wheels of this global movement turning smoothly. (2025)

Cristina Constantinescu, International Public Relations Officer since 2021

I plunged into the world of motorcycling and bought my one and only bike at 40 years old, and it proved to be one of the best decisions of my life. In the same year I discovered WIMA Romania, which was at its beginnings back then, and I feel like I have found a new family besides my own. Riding my bike is one of my biggest pleasures, with the girls, my partner or solo, and I hope my son will follow me in this passion, when he's old enough. Getting involved in WIMA Romania's activities and being a part of WIMA



World as an active member brought me many new friends, a whole community and sisterhood, which I'm very grateful for.

I'm currently Secretary of WIMA Romania, organising the national events and being everywhere I'm needed, and PR officer for WIMA International, in charge of the Instagram and Facebook pages. I'm glad I can give something back to the community that makes me so happy. (2023)

Karin Willers, International Webmanager since 2015



I have been a WIMA member since 2001, which was also the year I was at my first WIMA rally, namely the WIMA rally in Andalusia, Spain. Since then, I have attended most of the WIMA rallies. Currently, I have a BMW R 1200 GS, riding between 8000 to 10000 km per year.

I always try to combine a WIMA rally with a longer vacation, on the motorbike of course! The most memorable WIMA rallies of the last years

were in GB 2011, where we performed a round trip through Scotland and in Sweden 2015, which was our starting point for a tour to the North Cape. In 2019, we attended the WIMA GB rally, again extending our visit with a tour through Scotland. A WIMA rally is always a good occasion to meet old friends and to enjoy a week in a new country in the community of women, which share the same spirit. (2022)

Caroline Lunnon, International Historian since 2024



Less than a year after I learned to ride - at the age of 36 - I survived a no-fault motorcycle accident that tragically left me a widow and turned my entire world upside down. Despite the heartbreak, I was determined to ride again. By chance, I crossed paths with a few incredible women riders while buying another bike, and their encouragement and support helped me find the strength to get back on the road. Once I started riding again, I was completely hooked - the passion was back, stronger than ever.

Not long after, I dropped everything, packed up my life, and hit the road on my Triumph Tiger. When I got to Malaysia I

unexpectedly found myself sharing the road with the national president of WIMA Malaysia, Nor. We rode together for a few exhilarating weeks, and it was through that encounter that I discovered WIMA and proudly joined. That adventure didn't just spark a new connection—it completely changed how I travelled. I found a whole new world where the freedom of the open road meets the thrill of discovery and the unforgettable people you meet along the way.

After completing my own 15-month world circumnavigation, I joined in with the Women Riders World Relay finale. Here I met many more WIMA national presidents. I saw how motorcycling had connected and empowered women from all over the world in a powerful and very moving way. Freshly inspired, and having been grounded travel wise by the pandemic, I took on the role of national president for WIMA GB. This proved rewarding for the connections and friends I made doing it. After stepping down I remained on the WIMA GB committee. Among other things helping with the production of the WIMA GB newsletter every month, even though by now I was living in France – because I believe in the importance of the record the newsletter provides. This partly comes from having been able to search through decades worth of rich newsletters to find information for the new WIMA history book.

My role as international historian is about collecting and preserving information about WIMA from the past and present, for the future. (2024)

Chris-Maria Baumer, International Merchandise Officer since 2017



My journey with WIMA began in 2015 when I joined WIMA Austria and instantly fell in love with the unique atmosphere of the community. Before becoming a member, I mostly rode solo or joined male-dominated riding groups, where the motto was often 'Let's get there as fast as possible.' WIMA brought a refreshing change in perspective: 'Let's have fun and enjoy the journey!'

Since then, I've been actively involved in WIMA events, both nationally and internationally, and I greatly value the camaraderie that comes from connecting with other national divisions during rallies and meetings. These experiences inspired me to contribute more to the community by taking on a leadership role.

When I was elected international merchandise officer, I

took on the challenge with enthusiasm and a strong sense of responsibility. One of my key contributions has been the development of WIMA's merchandise web shop, which has made official gear more accessible to members worldwide. I've worked to ensure that the shop reflects WIMA's spirit and provides members with quality merchandise that they can wear with pride.

I'm passionate about continuing to enhance the merchandise offering, building connections across the WIMA network, and contributing to the overall growth and success of the organisation. It's been an incredible journey so far, and I'm excited to continue meeting WIMA members at future rallies and events.

As always, I look forward to seeing you 'in good spirit' at the next rally!
(2025)

Åsa Öhqvist, Website Design & Development Officer since 2024, International President from 2017-2020, International Vice President from 2015-2017



Åsa is designing and developing our new website for our 75th anniversary., she says of her new role – Motorcycling and the motorcycling community have always been a great part of my life. During my 25+ years of riding and 20 years as a member of WIMA, I have made the most wonderful friends, from all walks of life and from all over the world.

This is why WIMA is so important to me and why I chose to return to the WIMA officers team and to continue contributing to the organisation in the very hands-on way of building a new website. A website that will reflect our rich past as well as our present activities.

My riding experience is quite diverse – I have done a bit of everything: gravel, track and road – but it is travelling and exploring I love the most. Both locally, in Spain, where I reside now and in Sweden where I grew up, I go out on my own just to see where the road takes me. I've also spent time travelling extensively in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. At the longest, I lived nine months on my motorbike and in my tent. I then experienced the summer rainstorms in Wales, a heatwave in Hungary, autumn storms in Scotland and the freezing winter in England. Luckily by then I had found a housesitting possibility (through WIMA friendship). After this I returned to Spain and settled permanently in Catalonia. I ride a red BMW F650GS from 2007 and a blue F650GS from 2002. The blue bike is my favourite.

(2024)

Siân Davis, International Graphic Designer since 2024

Having been national president for GB for a couple of years and starting to get a grasp of WIMA as a whole, I felt my



skills as a graphic designer could be put to good use on an international level and so I was nominated and voted in as the first international graphic designer. I hope to help create a cohesive image of WIMA all over the world, to promote a recognisable brand and help strengthen the bond between riders, national divisions and the public.
(2025)

Michelle Lamphere, International Regional Officer – Americas and Australasia since 2025

In 2024, the International Council of National Presidents voted to create WIMA International regional officer roles and three regions: Americas & Australasia, Europe, and Asia & Africa. These new team members will work to develop and maintain good relationships among divisions in their region, support divisions with regional events, work with the international public relations officer on regional matters, foster good communications between divisions, ensure all NPs are informed about regional issues, assist the IP with preparing the NPs' meeting agendas, write articles for the WIMA website and social media, help the IP and IVP to promote WIMA and grow new divisions.

In 2025, Michelle Lamphere was elected by the NPs of her region as the first regional officer for Americas & Australasia. Michelle has served as the NP of the USA since 2020, building that division from dormancy to nearly 700 members. From 2013-2015, she travelled North, Central and South America by motorcycle, and published her account of this journey in 'The Butterfly Route'.

In 2019, she helped to organise WRWR (Women Riders World Relay), a global women's motorcycle relay, which included coordinating and communicating with non-English speaking contacts in more than 80 countries. Since then she has tried to keep her Spanish language skills current while building friendships and community for motorcycling women in the Americas.
(2025)



FORMER INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTS

Sheonagh Ravensdale

2nd International President, 1997-2003



By the mid 1980s, Louise Scherbyn was becoming overwhelmed by the task of running WIMA. The overseas divisions organised themselves and there was little contact between countries except at annual Rallies. I felt this must change – all WIMA members could benefit from increased communication. Everything was done by post, though around the early eighties, computers were beginning to appear in offices.

In 1997, the divisional captains decided to elect a new president. They chose me to lead them, and I received a letter from Theresa Wallach, congratulating me and wishing me good luck. My bike throughout these years was my Suzuki Bandit GSF 600cc which I'd fallen in love with during the WIMA visit to Japan that Yuko Sugeta and myself organised in 1996.

The president and founder controlled everything in the original WIMA constitution - I wanted a more democratic organisation, so some of us wrote a simple document which included giving each country one vote, no matter their size. That principle still remains. Floh Petit, the de facto German captain, became international treasurer and we charged half a euro per member. The fund we built up enabled us to make yearly contributions to FEMA (Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations). Throughout my time, Floh was there, working behind the scenes, translating proceedings into German at every rally.

We held two captains' meetings at each rally. The first, on the Tuesday to discuss issues and make recommendations. On the Wednesday, national captains presented these to their country's rally participants, and on the Thursday the captains met again and we voted on the issues. A celebratory dinner followed, organised by the host country.

Rowena Inzani, a WIMA GB member, created a website for us, and registered www.wimaworld.com. Suddenly WIMA was available to anybody in the world with access to the internet! We heard from countries where we had no contacts and where

we didn't even know that there were women riding bikes. We were thrilled to hear from little-known Estonia and from Japan when motorcycle journalist Yuko Sugeta started attending our rallies from 1993.

I dreamed of a revival of WIMA USA, so Pat Thomson and I went to the AMA Women & Motorcycling Conference in West Virginia, at our own expense, and found Alice Sexton. (See WIMA USA divisional report, 2009 USA rally report and former international officers section).

We introduced sub-committees. Rita Koopmanschap and others worked on a comprehensive constitution. With increased participation from Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the USA, a new logo was needed. We invited logo designs from all divisions and the decision to choose the current oval logo was finally made during Rita's time as international president. One last change I made, was to appoint the very efficient Doris Porter as vice-president as the WIMA workload had become too much. She started enthusiastically, but sadly died of cancer shortly afterwards.

WIMA has been an integral part of my life for over 40 years - I learned so much about other countries and WIMA communities during my six years as international president. WIMA has given me lifelong friends and my partner of 30 years Pat, without whose support I could never have managed this role. I shall always be grateful for the opportunity to make my contribution to this amazing organisation. (2025)

Rita Koopmanschap



3rd International President, 2003-2007

I was born in The Netherlands at midnight between 11th and 12th January 1968, so my mother told me. She chose the 11th, and I have celebrated this for many years now. Passing my motorcycle licence in the winter of 1988 it seemed a bit far to travel to the WIMA rally in Hungary, summer 1989, so I

took part in my first WIMA rally in Maurik, The Netherlands in 1989. Right before the next rally, in France 1990, my mother had passed away, therefore my father and youngest brother came along to my second international WIMA rally. My motorbike, a Kawasaki Z650 was transported in the back of our van, also during the crossing to Great Britain, where we took part in WIMA GB's ruby rally (WIMA's 40th anniversary). I still meet participants of those rallies, like Ann Weir from Wales whom we visited back then in 1990 and I was proud she attended our

2019 Dushi WIMA rally in Curaçao! I have tried to attend every WIMA rally since, because WIMA is like family in life, sharing ups-and-downs and the same big passion of motorcycling. I just love adventure, riding and meeting such diverse women coming from all over the world. My interest in other countries and cultures may have led to emigration to the country of Curaçao, an island in the Caribbean. It was 2001 when I continued my job as an English teacher here and started exploring this side of the world. I had sold my BMW K1100 to buy a 1976 boxer 600 CC that stayed in The Netherlands for my trips in Europe. Somehow, a similar 900 CC boxer from 1976 crossed my path on Curaçao; my colleague had me test-ride it and never got it back because I bought it from him. In the meantime, Sheonagh had asked me to become international president, of which I felt honoured, but I thought I was living too far away. After I had settled properly, I realised this shouldn't be an issue because WIMA is a worldwide association and was established in nearby USA in 1950. I decided to take the position for a while, finishing the tough job Sheonagh, Erica Smith and all national presidents had been working on, i.e. the first full international constitution since Louise Scherbyn's day. In 2006 I participated in the AMA women's rally in Atlanta, USA thanks to Alice Sexton who had invited me over. I handed over my international president's role, with my tent hammer, to Angie Trevaskis at the rally in Thüringen in Germany in 2007. Back home on Curaçao I spoke to Chinka Olario about WIMA and WIMA Curaçao was founded by the end of 2011. I've kept riding, motivating others to join and inviting people over to Curaçao. We did a Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) Ripple ride on our Dushi island; we've been amazed by the effects of this WRWR on motorcycling women worldwide and were proud to meet Hayley Bell in 2019 in Castleton, UK. Lastly, I was honoured to receive the Ellen Pfeiffer award in 2021, having met her several times at WIMA rallies in Europe. The word is spread: motorcycling is fun, so ride safe and looking forward to our next meet and greet. (2022)

Angela Trevaskis

4th International President, 2007-2012

I started riding over 35 years ago; my first bike was a dirt bike 175 Yamaha. I then progressed to a Honda 250, after that a Kawasaki GT 550 for over 20 years, BMW 1100 and then several Suzuki Vstrom 650s. I joined WIMA Australia Canberra Branch in 1986 and was treasurer for several years with this branch. In the mid 2000s, our membership seemed to be dwindling and the different branches were struggling in WIMA Australia. So those not doing so well folded, and those remaining members were made WIMA Australia members, with Victoria and South Australia running strong with their membership. At this time, I was WIMA Australia (national captain) president and with the different issues WIMA Australia was struggling with, we were able to hold a smaller membership base, change the constitution to match the changes happening with the membership to continue our love for riding and supporting women riders. With membership fluctuating and the enthusiasm of the membership, we kept WIMA Australia going.

In 2007, I was nominated and voted in as WIMA International president; the reins were handed over to continue promoting WIMA and encouraging more women to join. Through this time four new countries joined WIMA – Korea, Hungary, India and Curaçao and a fifth with Malaysia joining the year I resigned



from being international president, after having a motorcycle crash. There was huge change happening with technology improving and increased access with the internet. This enabled the WIMA International committee and national presidents to communicate more directly and faster. Keeping up with these changes, the WIMA International website was updated, the constitution updated, guidelines set up regarding using the different electronic media, e.g. setting up Facebook pages and monitoring these. This was done through a team effort with the WIMA International committee and national presidents. Through this time as international president, there were many positives working with the diversity of the membership within WIMA and it was a pleasure to have served as WIMA International president. (2021)

Claudia Fehrer

5th International President, 2012-2017

My name is Claudia Fehrer and I would like to briefly review, and give a personal account, of my time with WIMA over the past 20 years. There will of course be many more WIMA years to come, but this is my story to date.

I participated in my first WIMA rally in 2002 in the Czech Republic, and since 2007 I have had the honour and privilege to serve WIMA as an international committee member. During the rally in Germany, I was elected to take the role of the international treasurer (2007-2012). In 2011, I became vice president, and then in 2012 it came as a bit of a surprise to be chosen as the international president of WIMA (2012-2017).

During the rally in Finland 2018, I handed over to my successor, and I was proud to receive the Ellen Pfeiffer award. This came along with celebrating my 10 year anniversary serving in this awesome institution. The WIMA International committee achieved many positive things for WIMA during those years. Expanding WIMA from 16 to 28 countries, we were able to unite more women riders around the world, affirm our community, and increase our visibility as an organisation.

I personally gained a deeper understanding of WIMA and its facets. I learned to appreciate how much effort it requires to run a network of institutions on an international level, how much work goes on unseen in the background and gaining an understanding of how much responsibility rests on each official.



I believe the key to progress is to face upcoming challenges, and to providing a good service to the membership. The leader of an international association needs passion, accompanied with good fortune, and a willingness to undertake hard work.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and thanks to everybody who helped me to carry out my duties, enabling me to run WIMA effectively over the years of my tenure. During this time, I found fun and joy, making friends from around the globe. In the future I will continue with my mission, to be a true ambassador for WIMA, whilst continuing discovering the world on my motorcycle.

Using Article 2 of our international constitution, as a reference, I conclude my review with a little wish: Let's stand together, let's continue to achieve improvements for women in general, and for women riders in particular, let's keep the WIMA SPIRIT alive at all times!

'I feel FREEDOM! Riding my BIKE with the WIND in my face'
Claudia FEHRER (May 2022)

Åsa Öhqvist

6th International President, 2017-2020

I've ridden motorbikes for over 20 years and love to travel. I left my native Sweden for Spain in 2007 so I could ride all year round. My first three bikes were Ducati Monsters followed by a Kawasaki Versys. I've always travelled extensively, and for eight months, the Versys was my home. I currently have a 2007

BMW F650 GS in Spain and a 2002 model in Sweden. I've found that they are perfect for travelling, commuting and shopping.

During my time in WIMA government, as international vice-president and international president, I am especially proud of connecting with women in countries where women motorcycling isn't a common thing but rather a statement, breaking gender stereotypes and social rules – just as it was in the USA 75 years ago when WIMA was founded. I'm very proud to have worked with pioneering women to bring WIMA to Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, Greece, India, Lithuania, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Romania, the UAE and Ukraine – together we are changing the world of women motorcycling. I'm also proud of WIMA's support for the women riders at MJ Piki in Tanzania, a project very important to me.

The 2019 WRWR event also had a massive impact on women riders worldwide. We connected and supported each other in a new way, united by the common goal to pass the baton around the world. It was a privilege to be part of it as a guardian, and fantastic to be able to use my WIMA contacts to spread the word and bring people together. A welcome side-effect of this was that it introduced WIMA to women who were not yet familiar with what we stand for, and the same year a couple of new divisions came from this, WIMA Luxembourg and WIMA Italy, along with many more contacts from around the world. In addition, we found Michelle, one of the WRWR admins, to revitalize WIMA USA, our dormant mother division.

Working for WIMA government takes time and dedication and I want to thank my team who volunteered their time and expertise and all our national presidents. (2025)



FORMER INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS - THE EARLY YEARS

Three British chaps gaze in wonderment as Muriel Scott (Eng.) shows them how to ride sitting on a clown's outfit.



Muriel, WIMA News Summer 1969

Muriel Scott, British Division Captain from 1956

Very little is known about Muriel. The first WIMA rally in England is recorded as having taken place in 1956 and was organised by the then captain, Muriel Scott. About eight members attended. Muriel was not elected, she was appointed by Louise.

Brenda Alderson, British Division Captain, 1962-1963

Francis wrote of Brenda, in the Pearl Booklet (1980):

Brenda is one of those quiet and hard-working women whose hard work and effort has helped to make WIMA the large and thriving organisation it is today. She is quiet and bashful and assured me that she would be of no interest as a WIMA personality. I chose to disagree, because I feel that it's people like Brenda whose behind-the-scenes work often goes unacknowledged.

Brenda joined WIMA in 1960 and in 1964 she started the newsletter ... In those days the newsletter was an international edition that came out quarterly. Brenda was the first editor and later the circulation and advertising manager. When the newsletter began, Brenda's job was to write it, send it to Louise, the international president, for approval, and on its return to type, duplicate, collate, staple and mail it! No small task. Later the latter part of the job was handed over to a printing company in America.

Jopy Deijs-van Dinter, Continental Division Captain from 1959



Ellen Wetzig of Germany on 350 Hortex, Jopy Deijs-van Dinter of Holland on 250 Jawa and sister Jenny on 350 JAWA, leaving from Dover, Summer 1969. Photo provided by Kate Vogl

The first Continental division rally in 1958 was initiated by Jopy Deijs-van Dinter from Rijswijk in the Netherlands.

Anke-Eve Goldmann, International Press Correspondent, 1963-1977

Anke-Eve was born in Berlin in 1929, and the family moved to Prague at the start of WWII, only returning in 1945 to a city in ruins. Life was hard; they lived in one room as there was no heating. However, the house was in the American sector and the Americans ran a youth club where Anke-Eve learned not just English, but also about printing and journalism. She then taught German for ten years to children of American military personnel stationed in Germany. Meeting husband-to-be Hans von Kimmel marked a huge change in Anke-Eve's life – she discovered motorcycles. Anke-Eve started riding in 1953, on a BMW R67/3 which they traded for what is believed to have been the second production BMW R69 built, in 1955. She tells an amusing story of being stopped by the German police



Anke-Eve Goldmann, Photo ©Trui Hanoulle



while speeding on her BMW (without a licence). They were so astonished to discover she was a woman, that they just asked her about the bike and not for her papers! She only passed her test in 1956, on a Vespa.

In 1958 Anke-Eve found a newspaper article about WIMA. In the Netherlands, in Scheveningen at the Zandvoort racetrack, Jopy Deijs-van Dinter was organising an international rally for motorcycle women. Anke-Eve and Hans rode over. She was one of nine participants at the rally which went down in history as the beginning of WIMA in Europe. She later participated in the 1959, 1960, 1961 and 1963 rallies, becoming WIMA's international press correspondent. As well as attending WIMA Continental rallies, Anke-Eve was a regular at the mid-winter Elephant Rally in Germany, wrote articles for numerous international magazines and even designed her own leather motorcycle suits with the German manufacturer Harro.

In 1959, Anke-Eve beat eleven other WIMAs on her home circuit, the Nürburgring, and in 1961 she came first at the Hockenheimring in the pouring rain. Average speed: 125.9 km/h. The same year, Anke-Eve and Hans married, and she became a full-time housewife. It was the end of work and of financial independence, but she continued to ride motorbikes for another decade. After her son came a daughter – when her daughter was born, the following message came out at the 1965 WIMA Rally 'Anke-Eve has given birth to a girl! Behold! The future of WIMA is settled!' (Written by Sheonagh Ravensdale from Trui Hanouille's interview with Anke-Eve in Wiesbaden in 2024)

Audrey Henderson, New Zealand - Australia Division Captain, from 1966



Many years have passed, but this has failed to dim my love of motorcycling. Long before I had a bike of my own I was very involved; back in the early 1950's I was offered the opportunity to start and edit a Girl Riders page in the N.Z. Motor Cyclist, a monthly publication. I was a shorthand typist - not a journalist - but this was great and opened the opportunity to form countless motorcycling contacts throughout the world.

Almost immediately I was in touch with Wendy Hides (née Oliver) from Christchurch, N.Z. We were the first N.Z. members of WIMA. The late Louise Scherbyn regularly wrote to us with long and interesting letters. Her enthusiasm was infectious and it was clear to see why WIMA prospered under her guidance. Note: neither Wendy nor I were ever captain in this area. *Editor's note: Audrey is listed as Division captain on the front of WIMA News from Spring 1966.*

When I bought my own bike, I decided, 'Have Bike - Will Travel' and set out on a working holiday/tour of New Zealand. It was during this adventure I was dared to compete in the Ixion MCC (Wellington) Two Day Touring Trial. That's when I met Ian, later my husband. My bike had no hope of keeping up with him, so after our marriage I replaced my trusty little C10 BSA with a Speed Twin Triumph so we could ride together. After a couple of years of freedom, our first daughter decided to put in an appearance. Can't take a baby pillion!! Simple solution - a sidecar outfit. She loved that and consequently became the youngest member of WIMA. I had always felt that sidecars looked awkward and unwieldy. Not so, fitted properly they are great and can negotiate almost anything.

Now, in my nineties, I still have a soft spot for motorcycles, but have to be content with horrifying my friends by travelling regularly out of town in my car and really living a great life. Thank goodness I am not like some oldies with no interests and nothing to do. (2025)

Faye Rickert, USA - Canada Division Captain, from 1966

Faye was mentioned regularly in early issues of WIMA News, for trophies won at rallies, mention of her travels, and also her love of sewing.

Written of Faye in WIMA News Spring 1966, 'Last year, she dreamed the idea of making an autographed friendship quilt for herself and sending patches to members for signing on (sewing) their own names, thus making the quilt an item of interest. Faye's personal contact with members has extended acquaintance with one another. She sends a 'thank you' to members who helped make her quilt a success. The photo of Faye Rickert and daughter, Barbara Seber featured in WIMA News of Winter 1966. Also mentioned was Faye's granddaughter, Melody, who planned to 'own her own Bridgestone because her grandad's HD is almost always occupied by her grandmother or aunt.'



Faye Rickert and daughter Barbara Seber, photo from WIMA News

Find profiles of **Louise Scherbyn**, founder and president 1950, and **Theresa Wallach**, first vice president, 1962-1977, in the first WIMA women section.

Find profiles for the following former officers in the Ellen Pfeiffer awards section:

- Ellen Pfeiffer**, Continental Division Captain from 1964
- Maureen Willis**, British Division Captain, 1965-1973
- Sheila Whittingham**, British Division Captain, 1973-1976, and International Historian, 2006-2011
- Anne Gale**, British Division Captain, 1976-1981

Linda Richardson, British Captain 1964-1965, has not been traceable since she retired as British division captain.

FORMER INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS - INTO THE 21st CENTURY

Doris Porter, International Vice President, 2002



Doris Ravic joined WIMA around 1981/2. Doris's husband had retired from work and bought a motorbike for the two of them to tour Europe on. Sadly he died very suddenly, leaving her a widow with three motorbike riding sons. After a while, Doris decided that she would learn to ride a motorbike and go on those adventures anyway, on her own. Her story was featured in the local newspaper, as the local middle-aged teacher who had learnt to ride a motorbike and bought a 500cc bike, a Moto Guzzi V50. Doris was immensely proud of featuring in the local paper.

Doris lived in Romford, near London and helped fellow member Sue Herbert set up local meetings for WIMA members in East London. She was always 'tail end Charlie' on runs out, because she liked an excuse to go fast, catching up! Doris met Sue's other local biking friends and she became one of the founder members, in 1983, of the Imperial Elephant Motorcycle Club.

Doris became active on the WIMA GB committee, serving as treasurer for about six years and she loved to go to the international rallies every year. In late 1985 or thereabouts she met and started to go out with Steve Porter, 15 years her junior, whom she married in December 1986. The photo is of Doris on her Moto Guzzi T3 (Violet) at a WIMA rally in 1986. She loved Guzzis but the last bike she bought was a Triumph.

Doris loved competitions, quizzes (which she took very seriously) and she was highly sociable; always liked to be involved with everything.

In 2002 Doris suspected there was a potentially serious health problem looming but she was absolutely determined to ride to the WIMA International rally in the Czech Republic, regardless. She was voted international vice president and she regarded this as a crowning achievement. She was very well organised and was an enormous help to Sheonagh on the administrative front. Sadly she passed away in October 2002.

(Written by Sue Herbert, 2025)

Antje Lange, International Vice President, 2004-2005

I started riding when I was 18 years old with my first Yamaha SR500. Rode a Triumph after that (Thunderbird and Thruxton), then a Guzzi V7 Stone and ended up with my current Ducati Scrambler. I was travelling a lot with the bike: Spain, Italy, UK. Went through the Via Baltica from Berlin up to Finland through all the Baltic states. Rode through the US with a rental Harley Road King. Went to Poland,



France, Scandinavia, Czech Republic, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal – so a lot of European countries. First WIMA in 1996 in Lubenec, Czech Republic, 1997 Netherlands, 1998 Switzerland, 1999 Austria, 2000 Finland, 2002 Czech Republic, 2003 UK, 2006 Switzerland, 2009 Italy. Then I took a long break and just returned this year in 2025!

As vice president, I was basically helping the president, Rita Koopmanschap. We put together a WIMA International hospitality list. I met with Erica B. Smith from the US and compiled a few statistics about women motorbike riders for the US section for Erica and Alice Sexton. I helped an American woman with the organisation for her to be part of WIMA Czech. I compiled national presidents' lists and did all sorts of coordination work with the national presidents. As you know I was just doing this for one year, from 2004 to May 2005. I was out of a job back then, so I had the time to help Rita. (2025)

Suvi Ahtosalo, International Vice President, 2005-2010

Motorcycles were the object of my admiration and a dream of mine since I was a little girl. My dream was not dimmed by the fact that, in the 1980s, motorcycles were considered a 'man's thing,' and I didn't know any women who rode motorcycles. At the age of 15, I began my motorcycling journey with my brother's small Suzuki PV moped. As you might guess, I was the only girl in my hometown who rode a moped.

Finally, at the turn of the millennium, my spouse and I bought our first 'real' motorcycle - a Suzuki GSX 600F. Around the same time, I heard about a women's motorcycle club, which I naturally had to join. It felt amazing to find other women



motorcyclists and to feel like I belonged.

I became deeply involved in the association's activities. Together, we organised tours, trips, and events. There was always someone to ride with. I experienced my first WIMA rally in the Netherlands in 2004, where I got to meet women motorcyclists from all over the world. That year, I also attended my first meeting of WIMA presidents, and soon after, I was elected as the international vice president of WIMA - an incredible honour.

At the beginning of the 2000s, motorcycling communities quickly moved online. Traditional associations were perhaps seen as outdated, and women riding motorcycles was no longer considered unusual. We had to think about what unique value the association could offer its members.

The answer lay in rider training, and at that time, WIMA Finland decided to send its first two members to instructor training - I was honoured to be one of them. Traffic safety was an important issue in Finland, and I wanted to advocate for it within WIMA internationally. Another cause I found meaningful was the promotion of motorcycle travel. I deeply admired every WIMA member who travelled from other continents to attend WIMA gatherings in Europe and women who adventured around the world on their motorcycles. I wanted these women to be an example to all of us - showing that the world is open and that friends around the globe are there to support and help each other. Women have strength and courage! (2025)

Keiko Osawa, International Vice President, 2012-2015

It was a great honour to serve as an international vice president for the first time from the Asian region. At the same time, I was the national president of WIMA Japan. I supported the international president behind the scenes and promoted the smooth operation of WIMA, as I believed that was my role as an IVP. When I became the point of contact for people interested in establishing new divisions and eventually succeeded in doing so, I felt very happy and fulfilled. Despite the increasing number of divisions, the number of participants from Asian divisions in our international rallies was not high. Therefore, I visited Malaysia to strengthen the connection with the Asian

divisions. Fortunately, Claudia Fehrer, who was the IP at the time, agreed with this idea. Together, we met with members of WIMA Malaysia, participated in a local motorcycle event, experienced Malaysian culture, and were overwhelmed by the hospitality of the Malaysian people. We had an invaluable time together. I hope that someday, in addition to Japan, an international rally will be held regularly in other Asian countries.

(2025)



Floh Petit, International Treasurer, 1997-2007



I started my life on a motorcycle as a baby. My highly pregnant mother and me as second daughter in the sidecar of a BMW and my five-year old sister as pillion on the backseat (not close to the driver). But when the third baby was born, my mother decided to have a washing machine instead of the BMW.

At the age of 18 I wanted to pass my driver's licence for car and motorcycle, but because at that time I had to be 21 to sign contracts as an adult, my dad refused to sign, because he did not like women riding motorcycles, so I made my father's signature myself. (Good girls go to heaven, bad girls go everywhere.) When I came home with my first bike (a Yamaha 250 DS7) he was very disappointed, because it was a Japanese one. After two years with the two-stroke including two holes in a piston, I changed to a BMW 75/5 and now he was proud enough to ask me if he could ride it.

In 1977 I bought a Yamaha XT 500 and had a lot of fun with her, except the difficult starting procedure. Unhappily my brother-in-law crashed her and for some years I changed my ride to a Suzuki 1000cc.

In 1983 I stopped my career because I was pregnant with Sascia. In 1985 my husband allowed my WIMA journey to Stockholm on his beloved Bimota SB3 (not really a touring bike!) and in 1986 he surprised me with a black Kawasaki GPX 750R underneath the Christmas tree! Her name was 'Espresso'. She was followed by 'Moulin Rouge', my last motorcycle Honda VFR800. Sadly I had to sell her because of a cerebral attack in 2012. But now I feel very happy in my husband's sidecar (Suzuki Bandit 1200) which is very comfortable for me and powerful enough for him. (2025)

Sheonagh Ravensdale adds: Floh was hugely important for many years, from very early days in the 70s, helping Ellen Pfeiffer with the organisation of WIMA Germany, uniting many women's groups into one. She worked with scraps of paper and index cards, behind the scenes, supporting Ellen who preferred riding to admin! A discussion arose among the captains during the 1990s about replacing Louise who was no longer active. I checked with Floh if she wanted to do it and she refused, preferring to stay in the background as treasurer. We worked closely together throughout my presidency. We decided to build up a fund and to charge half a euro per member. Floh managed all of this, while working full-time and bringing up their daughter Sascia who came as a pillion until she was old enough to ride her own bike. Floh is an accomplished linguist and throughout my time as president would simultaneously translate my speeches into German at every rally. She was also the first person I turned to for advice. She remained as WIMA International treasurer, long after I stood down, until 2007. WIMA Germany and WIMA internationally would not be where they are now without her.

Lili Bernhard, International Treasurer, 2013-2017



Some find joy in books or music - mine is in motorcycles. The roar of the engine, the rush of the wind, the freedom of the open road - nothing compares. When I'm not managing finances as an international treasurer, you'll find me on two wheels, enjoying the ride - often alongside my fellow riders in an incredible women's motorcycle group. Motorcycles aren't just a hobby, they are a passion. And like any true enthusiast I own more than one. Each bike has its own

character and purpose. But riding is not just about the machine, it's about the people you ride with!

Being part of WIMA means sharing the road, experiences, and the unique bond that only fellow riders understand. Treasury work requires precision, responsibility and quick thinking - just

like riding. Managing WIMAs international finances feels like navigating a winding road: adjust to conditions and stay in control. Nothing clears the mind like a good ride, especially with a strong group of women who share the same passion.

Finance and motorcycles both demand discipline and a love for the journey. Whether I'm riding solo or with my sisters on the road, every mile is a reminder that it is not just about the destination - it's about the ride itself. (2025)

Maris Varik, International Treasurer 2017-2024

I joined WIMA Estonia in 2009, having done my A category licence in 2008. The WIMA ladies in Estonia are a tight group of very different individuals with various backgrounds and occupations. My first international WIMA rally was in Poland in 2014, and after that I have been to as many rallies as I can, because I just love the atmosphere.



My first motorcycle was a Moto Guzzi, after that I have had different models of Harley Davidson and a BMW GS. I usually travel by bike in my own or the neighbouring countries, my farthest destination being Croatia. Although small, Estonia offers a lot in the summer and my favourite pastime is to ride our beautiful small countryside roads and visiting events or friends. (2023)

Rowena Inzani, International Web Manager, 2001-2004

Rowena Inzani, International Web Manager, 2001-2004



I first heard of WIMA 'The Motorcycle Club for Women' back in 1984/5 at the excellent Women's Motorcycle Workshop in

London run by Anna Zee. It was here that I was learning how to look after my first 'big' bike, a Moto Guzzi V50, and discovering the wonderful world of motorcycling 'sisters, doing it for themselves' (Annie Lennox, 1985, google it!). I became a keen member attending many rallies, runs, meetings and events in the UK and abroad.

The international rally was as regular an annual fixture as I could make it, and I did many memorable trips from Hungary 1988 on my Kawasaki GPX750 to 2000 when I was able to get to both Finland (on my all-time favourite bike Ducati 750SS) and Australia (car, sadly).

I was a WIMA GB committee member for many years, first as treasurer then newsletter editor. In 2000 I started the international website. At that time most groups worldwide were producing paper newsletters, some starting to go online, and with the club growing internationally, the idea of creating a central repository for info relevant to all WIMA groups, cutting across geographical boundaries was born.

Primarily it was to share various aspects of common interest. It was largely text based (with fewer photos than would be expected these days), and held international news, WIMA history, travel, rally info and contacts.

I signed up for a couple of courses on HTML programming and how to use Dreamweaver, the prominent website design tool of the day. I registered the domain name www.wimaworld.com and set about creating the site. It was done as much for my own interest as the club's as I was already a mainframe computer programmer by trade.

I've owned around 9/10 road bikes plus a Yamaha 250 LC for a brief stint of club road racing. My passion for motorcycling is now replaced by a passion for coastal rowing, but it's lovely to think that the website is still going, still developing and bringing together WIMA women from around the world. (2025)

Jedi Seppänen, International Web Manager, 2011-2014

As a new WIMA member Jedi was voted in as website manager at the board meeting in Lancaster, England, in 2011. With the combination of a background as an IT specialist and a current work position as a sailor - with plenty of free time on shore - Jedi contributed to the development and maintenance of the website for a three year term. (Written by Åsa Öhqvist, 2025)

Alice Sexton, International Public Relations Officer, 2005-2011

Alice revived WIMA USA in the early 2000s, after two decades of inactivity due to Louise Scherbyn's declining health. It was still relatively early days for the internet with no social media, just emails and phone calls and vigorous networking. Alice took on the role of PR officer alongside her presidency of WIMA USA and energetically tried to introduce the following new ideas, though her ideas were not taken up by the other presidents at the time. (Written by Sheonagh Ravensdale, 2025)

Alice detailed her activities as follows:

1. Emphasizing WIMA International as the over-arching entity, with all divisions under that umbrella.
2. Establishing WIMA International as a non-profit organization with separate dues payable to the



organization, thus creating a stand-alone budget. Monies to be used for starting new divisions and funding the annual international meeting/rally. Divisions would continue to hold their respective rallies.

3. WIMA International to eventually raise enough funds to give small compensations to the website designer, treasurer, secretary etc. Possibly by providing info to the media and marketers about women riders (see #8 below).

4. Update logo and revise all materials, creating interest to a broader demographic, specifically younger riders.
5. Standardizing all printed and digital materials to create a unified message. Provide templates and other materials to all divisions for their use if they chose.
6. Supply and support divisions with everything needed to on-board new members, thus reinforcing a unified presence of WIMA International through all divisions. Centralizing the printing of materials would greatly reduce costs to divisions.
7. Using all of the above, position WIMA International as THE PREMIER organization for women riders worldwide.
8. Harness the power of our growing international membership to become the 'go-to' source for info about women riders for media, marketers, and other organizations.

Israt Kahn Mojlish, International Public Relations Officer, 2017-2020



Israt was voted in as PR officer at the board meeting in Jäneda, Estonia, in 2017. She came on board full of enthusiasm and is one of the few board members based outside Europe. She dedicated her time to bring life to the Facebook page and group by posts and interactions with

members. Her most noteworthy achievement, however, was the inauguration of the WIMA DAY competition. In collaboration with Åsa, who was IP at the time, she designed and ran the video competition in which the members could send in their own videos from their WIMA DAY ride out and she arranged

for membership votes for the best contribution. The WIMA DAY competitions have run in different configurations ever since, see the chapter of WIMA DAY for more info on this.

(Written by Åsa Öhqvist, 2025)

Liv Seuring, International Public Relations Officer, 2020-2023



I got my motorcycle licence in 2008, after being pillion a few times. I enjoyed riding a lot but got bored of always following the same roads. After a few years of not being an active rider, the bug bit me again when my then partner had the mad idea of crossing Vietnam from South to North on two small bikes ('It's so authentic, Livi!'). So, after three years of not having even sat on a bike, I suddenly found myself on a battered 100cc Honda Win in the busy streets of Saigon. But just a day later, it came to me like an enlightenment: THIS is it, this is my kind of riding. Travelling, seeing new roads every day, meeting new people, diving into foreign cultures. Since then, I often try to leave the busy roads, which led me into falling in love with off-road riding more or less voluntarily. I didn't have a big bike community around me in the past but that changed when I started working for Women Riders World Relay in 2018. A little later, I got a WIMA membership, joined the team and my sisterhood grew even bigger. It's amazing to have so many like-minded women around the globe!

As the PR officer, I do the newsletter and support Cristina and Mihaela with social media if needed (not very often the case), representing women riders off and online, and helping the IP if needed.

Liv is an honorary WIMA member, awarded lifetime membership for her work for the Women Riders World Relay. The award is featured in the chapter WIMA Special Recognition. (2022)

Andreea Iancu, International Public Relations Officer, 2023-2024

I am a copywriter officer at WIMA Romania and international PR officer at WIMA World, so that makes me a people-and-words kind of person at heart, even if I work in tech for my daily job.



I started riding a few years ago because it gave me strength when I most needed it, and I've been collecting memories with awesome people and amazing roads ever since.

I am an avid reader, a music addict and a proud mom of a 10-year-old boy who loves stories and travelling as much as I do and I hope we will share this passion in the future.

My life philosophy is to find inspiration in every endeavour, and this is probably what led me to WIMA's dynamic environment that constantly pushes me beyond my comfort zone, nourishes my curiosity, empowers me to easily approach new people and make new friends.

I consider myself lucky in many aspects and hope to be able to give back to the Universe a little bit of the magic it gave me to get this far and do what I most love in life. Riding motorcycles included (2024)

Pirjo Kivimäki, International Historian, 2012-2024



I have been riding my motorbike for over 30 years and a WIMA Finland member since 1999. Annually, I ride between 10–20,000 km, mainly around Europe and I have attended nearly all WIMA rallies since 2004 in Borculo, Netherlands. I fell in love with the atmosphere of WIMA World immediately.

I have held various positions within WIMA. I was vice president of WIMA Finland between 2007 and 2008. In 2011, I became

vice president again, and then I became president in 2013 and held this position until 2019. I was a member of organisation teams for the international WIMA rallies in 2008 and 2018. In 2012, I was elected international historian and I am proud of the work I do for WIMA. I am responsible for the WIMA archive and have, among other things, digitised historical photos and documents.

I was privileged to be the ambassador of WRWR (Women Riders World Relay) in Finland in 2019.

I live in Vantaa, in the south of Finland, where I work as an event producer, but I spend a lot of my time travelling around, mainly in Europe with my Ducati Monster. I am looking forward to seeing you at the next WIMA rally. (2022)

Jan Duke, International Merchandise Officer, 2008-2012



I have been a biker since 1980. I started with a Honda C50 crash gear pizza bike. Within a year, I was riding a Honda 250 Super Dream on L plates (you could back then). I joined WIMA in 1990; I came across them at the BMF Tailend Rally which I attended with the Gaybikers, a mostly male club back then. My first impression was that it was cliquey, but then I met Bev Leale. What a lovely lady; we just hit it off. She introduced me to Liz Allsop, and the gang. And then the adventures began. I think it was in 1994 that WIMA Belgium invited me over to this new biker motorloft called the Groenedijk just outside Ostend. In 1996 I acquired the beast, a Honda 750cc Super Magna, which I still have to this day, and have travelled many a mile, in many a country.

I spent quite a bit of the 90s in Europe at one event or another, making great friends. The Netherlands rally at Heythuysen in 1997 was my first proper WIMA international. Due to a heatwave, everyone camped around the edge of the field. But in the middle was one portaloos and six tents - I just knew that had to be UK and it was, what a great time!

During my time with WIMA I was the GB/UK regalia officer, turning what was a deficit into a profit, so much so that I was offered the post of the first international regalia officer. I designed and produced the 60th anniversary logo as both patch and stickers and delivered them to Bernadette at the 2010 Dutch rally. I planned much more, but due to ill health had

to stand down. I was then asked if I could sort an international rally for GB in 2011. A challenge, but with the right team we did it.

The picture is me at the 66th parallel (Arctic Circle) taken by my great friend then Australian president Angela Trevaskis, who flew over to England and borrowed my old BMW Funduro 650. The two of us set off to the Arctic on our way to the Finland rally in 2008 at Saimaa. WIMA has been a great club, but like all clubs, the more you put in the more you get out. I now have friends all over the world. (2025)

Birgit Bernhard (was Schremser), International Merchandise Officer, 2014-2017



Riding motorcycles, being part of WIMA and merchandising go hand in hand - they require style, precision, passion and a love for the details. Because let's be honest: a motorcycle that just sits in the garage is like a poorly printed T-Shirt - just sad. 'Why do you need so many motorcycles?' is a question I hear quite often. The answer? Because they all have their own personality. A bike for every mood - just like people have different shoes. As an international merchandising officer I ensure that products don't look just good - they tell a story. Branding is like a good motorcycle helmet: it protects a brand's identity and makes a strong statement on the road. And yes, sometimes I have to explain that cheap quality is just as bad as a poorly-tuned carburettor - neither gets you very far! I am always chasing perfection - or at least the perfect curve. There is nothing better than being on the road with like-minded riders, sharing the thrill, the freedom and the love for the ride. (2025)

Nicole Peters, International Public Relations Officer, 2019-2021

I have been a passionate motorcyclist since 2013. For several years now, I have also been an active member of WIMA Germany. My love for motorcycling has connected me with a strong community of like-minded women. Through WIMA, I had the opportunity to participate in international rallies in England, France, and Romania - unforgettable experiences that have led to many wonderful encounters. The exchange with riders from all over the world and the shared experience of these rallies make WIMA so special to me.

Ellen Pfeiffer and the Ellen Pfeiffer Award

The following description of Ellen Pfeiffer is from information provided by Claudia Fehrer of WIMA Liechtenstein, Floh Petit of WIMA Germany and Anne Gale of WIMA GB.

Ellen was one of the founders of WIMA in Europe in the year 1958. She was very active in motorcycle racing and competition. The early WIMA meetings in Germany, therefore, were always held in locations near racing circuits such as the Nürburgring or the Hockenheimring.

Accordingly, the focus of the subsequent annual rallies was about serious competitive racing. Being fast was always Ellen's intent and what gave her most pleasure.

She competed successfully in endurance and long-distance events on her Horex motorcycles, followed later by a Norton Dominator, a Honda CB450 and then BMWs.

WIMA owes Ellen a great deal for many things, but some say the most outstanding is the early links which she forged with the Iron Curtain countries, enabling women riders from suppressed countries like Czechoslovakia to meet us from the West and begin lifelong friendships.

After 25 years of organising the German WIMA division, Ellen 'retired' as an active captain, but kept her dignity like the 'Queen Mum'. She concentrated on being 'Ellen'; that meant, riding to almost every WIMA event no matter how far the venue was (she even took part in the well-known WIMA trip to launch WIMA Japan in 1996). She told real motorcycle stories, her experience during the years and about the countries she explored on her motorcycle, salvaging, now and then, some young women's big bikes from difficult alpine places and, most of the time, being faster than any other woman, in her very charming way.



Her speed became legendary, as did her technical expertise, which was as basic as her 25-year-old BMW. But...it was always enough to be fast. Ellen died at the age of 69 in March 2001. She was a 'First-Class Female Biker', a WIMA-Lady to the last.

The Ellen Pfeiffer award was discussed at several international presidents' meetings. At the 2003 international rally in Dorset, Great Britain, it was voted to give the award for the first time in 2004. The award was established to honour WIMA members for their outstanding contributions to WIMA, women and motorcycling.

Members of a WIMA division may nominate an individual or a group for the award. The national president sends this with a short proposal letter (who it is and why an individual or group deserves the award), to all national presidents six weeks before the Rally at the latest, so that they can become a candidate for the award of the year. The recipients of the award are elected by voting at the presidents' meeting during the international rally.

The award consists of a certificate signed by the international president of WIMA and, originally, a medal.

In 2020, the medal was replaced





by a crystal trophy. Since the implementation in 2004, there have been 22 women who have received the honour:

- 2004 Janet Cox
- 2005 Margit Blum
- 2006 Juliette Steiner
- 2007 Sheonagh Ravensdale and Pat Thomson
- 2008 Anne Gale
- 2009 None
- 2010 Mieke Westbroeck
- 2011 Monika Greiderer
- 2012 None
- 2013 Brigitte Döhler and Anna Zee
- 2014 None
- 2015 Uli Scholda
- 2016 None
- 2017 Margrith Sutter and Maureen Willis
- 2018 Zara Strange and Claudia Fehrer
- 2019 Chantal Hernandez-Hertrich
- 2020 Sheila Whittingham
- 2021 Rita Koopmanschap and Kaija Rytönen
- 2022 Floh Petit
- 2023 Margrit Podesser
- 2024 Pirjo Kivimäki

2004 Janet Cox

The first recipient of the Ellen Pfeiffer award was Janet Cox of WIMA GB. Janet was an enthusiastic member of WIMA, attending international rallies from 1982 onwards. In



November 1992 she had an accident on her way to work on her FJ1200 and was paralysed. Her boyfriend Ian, also a keen biker, bought a sidecar and together they continued to ride to the rallies, camping and taking the wheelchair with them. Janet and Ian even joined in the Japan WIMA trip in 1996 at a time when there was very little accessibility for wheelchair users (not just in Japan it should be said).

The WIMA national presidents and all who knew Janet were inspired by her courage and determination to continue attending our international rallies and her refusal to think she was anybody special. The photograph is taken from Swedish member Rita Creighton's calendar showing Janet riding a specially adapted sidecar at the 1994 rally in Wales.

(Written by Sheonagh Ravensdale, 2024)

2005 Margit Blum



Margit is a German motorcycle lady. She did a lot of racing and test rides for BMW. She was a very good friend of Ellen Pfeiffer and they often travelled together. She was one of the first members of WIMA Germany and she is still very interested in WIMA. She attended most of the meetings together with Ellen Pfeiffer. She organised the WIMA Rally in 1968 at the Nürburgring race circuit in Germany and she built up WIMA Germany with Ellen Pfeiffer. She won a lot of prizes in the races about 500ccm (BMW!), Ellen Pfeiffer in the class of 1000ccm.

She also organised the 1993 WIMA Rally in Obervellach in Austria on her own!

(Written by Verena Reindl, WIMA Germany, 2024)

2006 Juliette Steiner

Juliette Steiner was a pioneer of motorcycle life in Switzerland. It sounds like a fairy-tale, but it is real life!

Born in 1917, Juliette Steiner passed her motorcycle driving licence test in 1949 and started to travel. At the same time, she entered the first grass track races in competition with other motorcycle pilots. Between 1955 and 1960 she took part in several rallies and long-distance competitions all over Europe. One of many was the long-distance race Cannes-Genève-



Cannes, which means 2,600 km crossing snow-covered mountains and very often on roads that were not prepared for cars or motorcycles. Another race she did several times, was the 500 km around Genève. In 1957 she was among the only 20 that finished and won a sensational fifth place.

In 1960 the dainty woman made her dream come true. Together with her husband Nesto, she travelled to Munich to order her BMW. In the time when BMWs had to be black, she ordered a white one.

In 1958 Juliette Steiner was a founder member of the European section of WIMA, together with eight women from The Netherlands, GB and Germany. They first met in The Netherlands and had a competition week for women only in Scheveningen.

Unfortunately, in 1962 she had a serious accident without any fault of her own. After one year in hospital, she left the clinic in a wheelchair. Handicapped for the rest of her life, she kept contact with the motorcycle women and in 1976 she organised the International WIMA Rally in Yverdon.

It is a special luck and honour for the Swiss WIMA that we could celebrate her 85th birthday in November 2002. She was living independently and alone in her beautiful house above Yverdon with a view over the Neuenburger lake and the Jura mountains until she died in 2006.

(Written by Margrit Podesser, WIMA Switzerland, 2020)

2007 Sheonagh Ravensdale & Pat Thomson



This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA GB: Both Sheonagh and Pat have been great ambassadors for women in motorcycling. They got together when they decided to ride to Sweden in about 1995. Since then, they've been partners and their achievements, both personal and for WIMA, have been endless.

Sheonagh Ravensdale

Sheonagh was first elected to the committee of WIMA GB in June 1986 as events secretary and in August added the duties of address list officer, no easy task in those pre-computer days. In September 1986 she was elected as a WIMA representative

to the British Motorcycle Federation (BMF).

She was elected captain of WIMA GB in June 1992 and held this position for 6 years.

In 1998, Sheonagh relinquished the captain's position so that younger members could have the opportunity to play a greater part in running WIMA GB. She was always aware of her responsibility to develop skills and leadership throughout the organisation so that it was never dependent on just one or two leaders.

Sheonagh was elected international president of WIMA at the 1997 international rally in Holland (you may find some very amusing photos of the British team bowing down to the new Queen of WIMA).

Sheonagh and Pat brought fantastic organisational skills to WIMA, working with others to form a structure for WIMA as a modern international group.

Sheonagh represented WIMA at the AMA Women and Motorcycling Conference and was able to realise a dream when the new WIMA USA was established. 'There is huge excitement in the international WIMA community at the news that WIMA USA has started up again - in fact we're thrilled to bits! It's been a personal dream of mine since I became president that WIMA should have an active presence in the land where it all started, and that dream is now coming true.'

Both have also shown themselves to be great riders. They have ridden tens of thousands of miles.

As ex-WIMA president, Sheonagh started a new charity, the WIMA Street Kids project (UK charity no 1108088). WIMA officially adopted the India Street Kids Project as the first ever WIMA global charity at the August 2004 international rally in The Netherlands. She and Pat organised a Round the World Motorcycle Relay with a scroll for people to sign and to raise funds to build a refuge and school for young girls at risk from prostitution in India. The next fundraiser was the first ever all-female fire walk held in the UK at the BMF Tail End Rally in Peterborough.

Pat Thomson

Pat has been instrumental in many WIMA initiatives both in the UK and on the international scene. Indeed, she was a key supporter of Sheonagh in establishing WIMA International as a formal organisation.

Pat was also a prime organiser of the international rally in GB in 2003 and has been a member of the WIMA GB committee as treasurer. Almost all of the detail in the above statement not only supports Sheonagh, but also her partner Pat in WIMA GB's nomination for them BOTH to receive the Ellen Pfeiffer award – their foreign travels are now legendary – their work on India Street Kids Project in itself, deserves to be recognised and the hard work they both put into promoting WIMA all over the world is something which proves them to be uniquely committed people.

Both Sheonagh and Pat last year rode the length of South America – and won a prize in the 2006 Horizons Unlimited photographic competition.

All of this demonstrates that Sheonagh and Pat have made an enormous contribution not just to WIMA, but to the motorcycling community. They have worked tirelessly to strengthen WIMA from within. The work they have done in

the wider motorcycling community has built the reputation of WIMA and they are worthy recipients of the Ellen Pfeiffer award.

2008 Anne Gale



This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA GB: Anne Gale joined WIMA around 1970. She was assistant captain for Brenda Alderson for three months in 1975 but took over as captain in 1976 until 1981. During that time, Anne organised a full committee, held annual AGMs and created the first WIMA GB constitution. Anne held the positions of captain and magazine editor – two very time-consuming positions but she carried out the duties to both posts admirably and with great effect.

As more club fees were coming in and WIMA became more affluent, Anne improved WIMA NEWS and membership numbers began to increase further.

Anne's hard work on the various committees of WIMA GB is legendary; from 1981 to 1984 Anne served as rally officer and address list secretary and from 1984 to 1987 as rally officer. From 1990 to 1999 Anne was the MAG/BMF representative for WIMA GB and from 1999 until the present day is the MAG/FEMA rep.

In 1977 Anne was made WIMA GB member of the year and in 2000 was awarded WIMA GB honorary membership. Anne still rides her Harley more regularly than most and although she is semi-retired at over 60, she puts most of us to shame.

Without Anne's foresight, imagination and sheer hard work and dedication, WIMA GB would not be the democratic club it is today, and we all owe her a great deal in this respect. WIMA GB therefore wishes to nominate Anne for the Ellen Pfeiffer award 2008 in recognition of her services to WIMA from the 1970s right up to the present day.

2010 Mieke Westbroek

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Netherlands: Mieke is a motorcycle riding woman, who for many years now has organised annually a 'Lady's Day' through the Dutch 'Twentse Motorcycle Club'.

These yearly events were so successful that she thought there must be more women out there, particularly in The Netherlands, who would also be interested in joining in.

So, in 2000 she created an internet website with a bulletin board where all motorcycle-riding women can exchange their

thoughts, experiences and motorcycle business.

Through this communication avenue, came a request for a National Bikesters Day, which since the year 2000 has become a permanent annual event!

The first National Bikesters Day was made up of 80 participants and took place on the 2nd Saturday in June. An enormous success and a pleasurable ride nonetheless! The participants were so enthusiastic that it is now a tradition every 2nd Saturday in June where Mieke remains the leading factor.

It is my opinion that Mieke deserves this award based on her enthusiasm for her yearly event and the passion she shows for motorcycle riding.

She knows how to bring many motorcycling riding women together (this year 140 participants) and not only in The Netherlands but riders from Belgium and Germany! If you view the bulletin board on the Bikesters Website, www.bikesters.nl you will see firsthand the daily entries by women and for women!

2011 Monika Greiderer



This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Germany: Monika Greiderer has been an active German WIMA member since around 1978 and she was the main organiser of two international WIMA rallies: 1999 WIMA Fantastica in Austria and 2009 WIMA Italia in Italy.

But she is much more than this. She is the founder of the 'South Germany Women Motorbike Meeting.' In 1994, she had



the idea of a special national meeting for motorcycling women just to shorten the time between two international WIMA meetings. Other women were infected by her great idea and started to organise national meetings for motorcycling women all over Germany. Organisers were the different women's groups in Oberbayern, Niederbayern, Franken and Baden-Württemberg. It was rotating in springtime each year between these four areas.

Verena Reindl added this information more recently: Above all, Monika is owed praise for her endurance through 45 long years to build up and conserve the regular meeting of 'Münchner Frauen Motorrad Stammtisch' which has around 40 members. Patiently and bravely she has been meeting twice a month since 1979 with the various members, organising riding weekends at the start and the end of the motorcycling season. Outside this period she organises a Christmas dinner and a skiing weekend in January.

In 1979 she was also the co-founder of Hexenring, an organisation for motorbike-riding women to have contact all over Germany. The idea is simple: A woman is riding through Germany, she needs a sleeping place, a cup of coffee or some technical help; if she is a member of Hexenring, she can ask the other members about this. Hexenring still exists and is run by a handful of women including WIMA Germany member Elke Geier.

Every time she met a woman she asked her: 'Have you ever heard about WIMA? No? Come and join us, it is like a whole family all over the world and we all like motorbike-riding, having fun, talking about the difference between the countries, and more.'

Throughout these years, Monika has become an admirable model of a women-focused and very engaged motorcyclist. She continues to do a lot for women's motorbike riding and, last but not least, she has ridden more than a million kilometres on her different motorbikes.

2013 Anna Zee

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA GB: Anna has been riding since the mid 1970s; she still commutes to work by bike, despite having free senior citizens travel on public transport. She rides two GS500Es and an FJ1200. Throughout the 1980s and 90s, she was a fixture at WIMA International rallies. She is still an active WIMA GB member.

Contribution to Motorcycling: Anna organised the Women's Motorcycle Workshop in London in the late 1970s and early 1980s, teaching basic mechanical skills to women bikers when women were not expected to ride, and especially not to get their hands dirty!

Anna was also, at the same time, a committee member of AMADL (Association of Motorcyclists Against Discriminatory Legislation), an early UK motorcycling/political lobbying organisation.

During the 1990's, Anna became increasingly involved in the activities of the BMF (The British Motorcyclists Federation), the largest UK bike membership organisation. She was elected to the post of PTS (Political and Technical Services Director) of the BMF in the late 1990s, a role she continued to play through to the early 2000s. Anna was responsible for the direction and policy of the two BMF Government Relations Executives during



a time of pressure on motorcycling in the UK and especially in the EU.

Anna was then elected as the Chairman of the BMF during a very difficult period of inner organisational politics within the BMF. Anna managed to steer the BMF through this period, when it seemed possible that the entire organisation might collapse, to a position where it is now recovering. Anna was chairman for over 5 years.

Having guided the BMF organisation to survival, Anna has recently reverted to the PTS director role, where she has been instrumental in supporting FEMA (Federation of European Motorcycle Associations) to an effective future.

During the BMF's extended financial problems, she has always prioritised European lobbying at the expense of narrow national organisational interests. The future of European motorcycling will always be heavily influenced by the EU Commission and FEMA remains the front-line lobbying organisation in Brussels.

Anna has given a huge amount of her time and personal support to a future for motorcycling in Europe and says: 'Support your own biker organisation, whether it is BMF (UK), BDU (Germany), MAG (Netherlands) etc. FEMA will represent us all! And let us not forget that European policies on motorcycling influence other governmental organisations in other parts of the world.'

Sheonagh adds: It is because of Anna that I came to the Women's Motorcycle Workshop, where I met Jennifer Killen who was a member of WIMA. The rest as they say is history...

2013 Brigitte Döhler

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Germany:



Brigitte Döhler, maiden name Walther, was an active member of the motorcycle sport in the former DDR (East Germany). She also did street racing, was a touring rider and she rode with her MZ all through the states of the Eastern bloc. The difficult political situation between East and West Germany didn't allow crossing the border from East to West. Even so we had a lot of WIMA rallies in the former Czechoslovakia (1967, 1972, 1979) and Hungary

(1988). WIMA was founded in Europe in the year 1958. In 1967 Brigitte met the German captain, Ellen Pfeiffer, and they became friends. Brigitte became an (unofficial) WIMA member and in the year 1990 her membership became official. Brigitte has now been a member for 46 years and she still rides. Her engagement for WIMA all over the years is applaudable, particularly in the first years. Brigitte is like a founding member.

2015 Uli Scholda



This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Austria: Let me tell you a story about a woman. She does not walk on the world's stage; she does not speak to or influence the 'big' people in this world. But she has made a difference. Without her actions and persistence, there would be no WIMA Austria and none of our members would have had all those great experiences that WIMA gives us.

Uli started her motorcycling as a pillion passenger in the 1980s and then moved to riding herself – and has never looked back. She was a member of a mixed traditional motorcycle club, but always interested in and looking for connections to women motorcyclists. In the early 1990s, she and others founded a women motorcyclists' 'Stammtisch' – a monthly get-together.

In 1995, she went to her first WIMA in Sweden. After discovering that there had been a WIMA in Austria in the 1950s, she decided to re-establish WIMA Austria and for years she was our National President.

She organised group rides, trial riding and would speak to any woman motorcyclist she met, giving them a card with our group meeting details. For many of us, her steady leading of rides gave us the practice and confidence we needed as new motorcycle riders. It must have been very boring at times, dragging us along bendy roads that are just begging for a bit more speed.

As you know, we are a pretty consistent membership group of WIMA and since her first WIMA was 20 years ago, it is time we showed her our appreciation.

So this is our 'Thank You' to Uli, by proposing her for the Ellen Pfeiffer award – we know it will mean a lot to her and be cherished. Thank you for making WIMA Austria happen.

2017 Maureen Willis

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA GB: Maureen has been a member of WIMA since the 1950s. Now in her mid-eighties, she is an honorary member of WIMA GB, and lives quietly, in Wales, with her husband, Ron.



Our founding president's method of running WIMA was to control all the national groups. When this was no longer practical, WIMA GB would have failed had it not been for Maureen who kept WIMA GB afloat. She wrote personal letters to lapsed members, sent information out to all the members and did all of this out of her own pocket until the group started to build up funds. The letters she wrote were the beginnings of our monthly newsletter, and she held a rally in 1965, thus introducing the concept of an annual rally for WIMA GB members.

WIMA GB is one of the longest running WIMA national groups, but would many national groups running today have even formed, if Maureen had not kept WIMA GB going, and met and talked to so many people on her travels? We firmly believe that Maureen has made a massive contribution to WIMA World.

This is Maureen's WIMA story in her own words: 'I was fourteen years old and living in Dublin when the boy next door got a motorbike. It was love at first sight. A beautiful 1931 KTT Velocette! Soon I was spending hours in his garage, learning how the engine worked. I really loved bikes and welcomed any opportunity to go pillion on any make of bike.

I joined WIMA, but never met any members. One day, I had a letter from the American WIMA president, Louise Scherbyn, asking me to take over as captain of WIMA in Britain. Once I got the names and addresses of members, I wrote to all of them on a regular basis. This was the start of our WIMA NEWS of today.

In January 1965, we went to the Elephant Rally in Germany, where I met Ellen Pfeiffer, the German WIMA captain, and also several American members. In October 1965, I held the first WIMA meeting in Britain at my parents' hotel in North Wales, taking advantage of my parents going away on holiday! After that I held an annual WIMA rally, every year, for several years. These were camping rallies and days were spent chatting and taking part in gymkhana events. In the evenings we sat round a campfire and sang songs.

In 1970 we went to the WIMA rally in France. Being WIMA's 20th anniversary, we were given a pendant with 'WIMA 20th Year' on it. The scenery was great, the rally was great, and we met many lovely, friendly WIMA girls and families. It was a highlight of my biking days in France. To this day, I still wear that medallion.

I got a Honda 400 Four in 1976. This bike was called 'Ladybird'. We attended the California Motorcycle Jamboree held at Ventura just north of Los Angeles, where I met American

and Canadian WIMA members. As we got older and retired, we spent more time riding locally.

It is great to know that WIMA is expanding to more and more countries, and I am proud to be part of such a great organisation. I still enjoy being a WIMA member and only regret that at the age of 85, I have finally got to hang up my helmet due to failing eyesight. I have now sold all my bikes.

So I say to all members – KEEP ON BIKING as long as you possibly can.'

2017 Margrith Sutter



This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Switzerland: This year, Margrith has become 68 years old. In 1984, she joined WIMA Switzerland and has been a member for over 33 years! She has hardly ever left WIMA, she is and has always been a very active member. For many years she was our cashier, she managed the finances with care and accuracy. She has helped to organise every international rally in Switzerland and brought the rally to work with joy and power. She has hardly ever missed a WIMA, everybody knows Margrith! Especially the 'older' of the WIMA scene.

Despite many misfortunes she has remained faithful to the WIMA, many friendships have emerged, which she still maintains until today. Already many WIMA women have gotten shelter on their way through the world in her house, for all she has an open door.

WIMA Switzerland would not be here and like this without Margrith's commitment! We find Margrith has earned this award.

2018 Zara Strange

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA GB: Zara Strange has been a member of WIMA GB since 2008, and served on the committee for several years, as webmistress, and was instrumental in organising our very successful members' forum. Sadly, with the increased use of social media, this died a natural death. Since then, Zara has remained an active and supportive member of both WIMA GB, and WIMA World, and last year was elected international vice president.

Zara lives in the northeast of Scotland, so every journey to a WIMA event is a long ride! Nevertheless, she regularly supports events in the south of England, attending lunches and birthday parties held for some of our eldest members, usually in the Somerset area. Most of these entail a return journey of around 1000 miles (1610 km). She is always on her motorbike, and



arrives quietly but cheerfully at each venue, no matter how wet and cold she sometimes is!

She is also a regular attendee at rallies, both national, and international, including the Dutch international rally in Markelo, and the French national rally in Val d'Ajol. Whilst on its own this is not an amazing feat, what makes Zara unique is the distances she travels to get to each event.

This is what GB members say about Zara: 'I vote for Zara for her quiet but constant support and leadership by example and her efforts to attend national, international and other groups' meetings (like France). She's also very supportive to other riders and never judgmental.'

2018 Claudia Fehrer



This is the nomination that was submitted by Kathy O'Donnell of WIMA Australia, edited by Claudia in 2025: Claudia served on our international committee for many years, first as assistant treasurer, then as treasurer, then as vice president and for many years as president.

Claudia joined WIMA in 2002 and her first WIMA International rally was in the Czech Republic. Since then, Claudia has attended almost every international rally including Japan and Australia, in total 20 rallies including 2024, looking forward to attending many more WIMA rallies in coming years.

Claudia joined the WIMA International committee in 2007. During the time Claudia served as president, nine countries joined WIMA. She will continue her mission as an ambassador for WIMA and she will carry on keeping the WIMA spirit alive.

In 2015 I hosted Claudia in my house when she travelled to Australia for the international rally. She was travelling with

Silvia Wiesner-Kaschner. Claudia had encouraged Silvia to join her, to come to Australia for her to attend the WIMA Rally. Silvia spoke no English, so Claudia translated for her for their entire trip.

Last year my husband travelled with me to the WIMA rally in Estonia. To save money, Al decided to buy a second-hand motorcycle in Germany to ride. We would not have been able to do this without Claudia's assistance. She was so helpful and so accommodating. She met us at the train station, hosted us overnight, allowed Al to service the motorcycle at her place.

2019 Chantal Hertrich

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA France:



Without Chantal, WIMA France would probably not be where it is today! Chantal went to her first WIMA rally in 1974, as pillion, because she had just failed her motorcycle driving licence. The following years, on motorbikes never too large to fit her tiny size, she crossed France, several European countries and even

Australia, to join every WIMA rally she could go to. She knew many of the pioneers such as Ellen Pfeiffer, Agnès Acker (WIMA France founder), Juliette Steiner, Lida Abrahamova...

In 1985, at the Swedish international rally, she was declared captain of WIMA France by other WIMA division captains as she was the most regular French participant at WIMA gatherings. Chantal remained captain of WIMA France for 22 years. During that time, she organised many 'Drei Länder Treffen' (rallies between the three neighbouring countries of Germany, Switzerland and France), mostly together with Margrit Podesser, as well as the international rally of 1990 in Alsace and was very active in promoting the association everywhere she went.

Having a business to run and a teenager to raise, WIMA France captainship was handed over to Sophie Vignon sometime around 2007. Though Chantal was still participating in regional WIMA gatherings as much as she could. In 2017, when Aline, Marie and Anne took over WIMA France, Chantal, freshly retired from her beauty institute, took part with them in the new WIMA France board. During two long afternoons, many phone calls, and over many photo albums, Chantal told many stories from the early WIMA times, explained in detail the convivial and familial spirit of WIMA and its sorority. Oh! And she handed over quite a good amount of money left from the 1990's rally, a sum of money added to what Sophie transferred and helped WIMA France to be revived greatly. By this nomination, we, WIMA France members, believe that 'our mom' has earned the Ellen Pfeiffer award.

2020 Sheila Whittingham

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA GB: Sheila Whittingham has been a member of WIMA GB since 1967

and has been active in her support of WIMA throughout this time. She even met her husband Eddie through WIMA! In 1973 she took over from Maureen Willis as captain of the GB division – at this time the captain did everything: badges, membership, organising rallies as well as the magazine, as there was no committee then. The news sheet from the USA was becoming increasingly erratic, so Sheila found an old spirit duplicator and started sending WIMA News out as a monthly publication. Membership rose from 50 to 250 after Bike Magazine published an article on WIMA. Sheila continued as editor of the newsletter for many years.



Sheila has been riding since she was about 11 years old and got her first road bike at 16 – a BSA Bantam. She's owned and ridden a total of 42(!) motorcycles including a Kawasaki trail bike, a Moto Guzzi, a Buell, a Harley and possibly her favourite: a 1951 Velocette Mac 350 touring bike. She has attended numerous WIMA and other non-WIMA rallies at home and abroad, and has passengered in a trials outfit, and done hill climbs. Sheila still rides all through the winter in snowy Wales at the age of 72.

Sheila was the first WIMA national then international historian for around 15 years. During this time, she collected and stored a mass of material including WIMA newsletters and photo albums from 1965 onwards. From this she produced a terrific CD of archive photos called 'WIMA – 52 years of fun from 1950 to 2002'. Sheila is proving invaluable in helping in providing information about the early years of WIMA International for the update of the WIMA history. We believe she is long overdue recognition for her more than 50 years of contribution to WIMA and truly deserves the Ellen Pfeiffer award.

2021 Kaija Rytönen



This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Estonia: Kaija has played the major role in founding WIMA Estonia. She was the one who contacted WIMA International in 1999 and together with fellow Finnish female riders, made WIMA Estonia

come into existence. After 22 years she is still a valuable member of WIMA Estonia, and we are proud and lucky to have her. Kaija was also the very first president of WIMA Estonia and held this responsibility for many years.

Kaija is an adventurer discovering new ways to ride and new ways to do things. With this attitude, she paves a road for other riders to explore new places and encourages others trying something that they couldn't even think of. With this attitude, she keeps surprising us in WIMA Estonia, and we are so thankful she does it.

Kaija is also a wonderful networker. It's amazing which people she knows, what events she finds out and especially in the field of music. The WIMA International rally in Estonia in 2017 entertainment programme was built up fully with joint forces from Kaija and Maris. Thanks to Kaija's network, WIMA Estonia was able to bring in such a variety of live musicians with high quality and masters in their own field. And it is so easy to work with her as she is always looking for an opportunity instead of the problem ... and she always finds an opportunity. Her passion and joyous spirit are an inspiration for all WIMA Estonia members.

2021 Rita Koopmanschap



This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Curaçao: Rita has been a member of WIMA since 1988; first of WIMA The Netherlands and later of WIMA Curaçao. She got her motorcycle licence in December 1987 and decided she wasn't experienced enough to attend the 1988 Hungarian rally. As of 1989, Rita has attended all WIMA rallies in Europe and she was acquainted with Ellen Pfeiffer; they were both musicians, played the guitar and sang together. Rita was captain of WIMA The Netherlands from 1998 to 2001. Then she moved to Curaçao, Dutch Caribbean, and she was the WIMA international president between 2003 and 2006. She always made sure to plan her vacation around the WIMA rallies in Europe and amongst others, attended the AMA Women in Motorcycling Conference in Atlanta US, in 2006. As a teacher she was, regretfully, not in the position to attend rallies outside school vacation weeks like the rallies in

Australia, New Zealand and Japan. In Curaçao, Rita was always talking about WIMA so enthusiastically that together with two other female motorcyclists, WIMA Curaçao was founded in December 2011.

Rita 'brought' WIMA to Curacao and as co-founder of WIMA Curaçao, has been involved as secretary/treasurer and she is the best WIMA ambassador you can have.

Years before the Dushi WIMA rally 2019 in Curaçao, Rita first checked by means of Survey Monkey questionnaire if there were enough WIMA members worldwide interested to participate and able to fly to Curaçao for this rally. With the results of the questionnaire, she knew what people were interested in, visiting a tropical rally and she started an inventory of possible activities, locations, prices etc. Later more WIMA Curaçao members joined her to prepare for the first Caribbean WIMA rally ever, which was very successful.

Rita is the binding factor for WIMA Curaçao. Without Rita, we must conclude that WIMA Curaçao would not have been founded and it would not have existed anymore. Rita never gives up and brings forward plans, keeps all informed and makes sure that board and member meetings are held. She ensures that there is an activity calendar, she takes care of the minutes of meetings and helps other members when they have motorcycle questions or issues. Not only in Curaçao, but also during WIMA International rallies she tries to find solutions or approaches a person who can assist a person with technical problems with their bike. Together with Rita we have made a lot of great memories, we still add to those, and new friendships have frequently been started.

Rita is very communicative, sociable and she easily associates with anything concerning motorcycling. In the timespan of almost 20 years that she has been living in Curaçao, she has come to know a lot of people and they always ask her if she has been riding recently and how WIMA Curaçao is doing. During WIMA International rallies, you notice that she knows most people and has socialised with many for a very long time.

Rita is always up for fun (wrapping a bike in toilet paper, decorating a tent, popping up on stage playing the drums, doing the Flee-Fly-Flo song whenever Berry Keller was not present) playing the guitar, providing entertainment at the campfire, and singing with whoever wanted to join. She even brings along, when space on her motorbike allows, several copies of song books so everybody can join in and sing together.

Finally, Rita is considerate and always keeps a keen look out to see if everybody is safe and she also encourages new riders to ride safely, helping them wherever she can with riding advice.

The 2021 WIMA International rally in Grolloo, The Netherlands, will be Rita's 33rd rally. We, WIMA Curaçao members think it is about time that Rita receives the Ellen Pfeiffer award!

2022 Floh Petit

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Germany: Floh has been a WIMA Germany member since 1974, one of its early members. She came to her first rally in 1974 and participated in many rallies after that. Almost from the beginning, she supported Ellen Pfeiffer energetically and committedly. She took care of the administration, the public relations, the press and much more in the steadily growing WIMA Germany division. In



1978, she also took over the post of treasurer.

In 1983, Floh took over the office of WIMA Germany captain from Ellen Pfeiffer and led the business of WIMA Germany for 18 years in a diligent one-woman-show, until she decided to hand over the office in 2001. After that, she was still active as international treasurer until 2007.

Unfortunately, for health reasons, Floh had to end her great passion 'motorcycling' forever.

Nevertheless, she is still a WIMA Germany member and is represented in the meantime by her daughter Sascia, who has also been a WIMA Germany member for several years.

Together with Ellen Pfeiffer, Floh is one of the most important women in the WIMA Germany history since our foundation in 1958 and a WIMA ambassador with passion. She speaks German, English, French and a little Italian. WIMA Germany, and the international WIMA would not be what it is today without Floh. Only because of women like her, can an organisation like WIMA exist for more than 70 years - Floh has been a part of our WIMA family for almost 40 years and has more than deserved this award, which bears the name of one of her early WIMA friends, for her years of voluntary commitment. Hardly anyone knew Ellen better than Floh.

The fact that she has not received the award so far can only be due to the misunderstanding that WIMA Germany assumed that repeated nominations were not possible. Floh was nominated in 2006 - a year in which there were 3 nominations, but only one award was given. Multiple awards have only been possible since 2007. We would now like to finally give Floh the honour she deserves and present her with the Ellen Pfeiffer award. If any woman deserves it, it is Floh.

2023 Margrit Podesser

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA France:



Margrit has been a member of WIMA for nearly 50 years and she was one of the founders of WIMA Switzerland, back in 1984. She was president of WIMA Switzerland from 1990-1996. Margrit is a distinguished motorcyclist who has travelled more than 600,000 km around Europe on a wide variety of bikes and participated in 37 international rallies starting with France in 1977, and

including Japan, New Zealand and Curaçao. She organised three international rallies in Switzerland in 1980, 1984 and 1991 and several smaller events. Together with Chantal Hertrich, she also organised several 'Drei Länder' (or three-country) meetings between WIMA Switzerland, WIMA France and WIMA Germany in the Alsace region. Margrit was a close friend of Ellen Pfeiffer's and together with two other Swiss women, rode to Frankfurt for Ellen's funeral.

2024 Pirjo Kivimäki

This is the nomination that was submitted by WIMA Liechtenstein:



Pirjo is a long term enthusiastic motorcyclist and she is our valued member since January 2021, holding a sustaining membership. She is a member of Ladies' Bike Club (LBC) WIMA Finland since 1999 and riding motorcycles already for about 35 years. Pirjo rides up to 20 000 km a year not only touring in Finland, but also abroad to discover Europe. She visited

many countries mainly riding her Ducati Monster 660 ccm, her companion for many kilometres if on long or short-distance rides or just her vehicle to ride to work on daily routine. No doubt to call her an experienced motorcyclist with international skills in various aspects! Pirjo is well known in the WIMA World community as she attended almost all WIMA Rallies starting with the rally in Borculo in summer 2004, hosted by WIMA Netherlands. To describe simply using her own words shows her cordial connection to WIMA to the best: 'I fell in love with the atmosphere of WIMA World immediately'.

Pirjo's WIMA career started already in 2007 taking the role of the vice president of LBC WIMA Finland. Since then she held various positions within WIMA World.

In 2013 she was chosen for the presidency of LBC WIMA Finland, until 2019. During her terms of office she managed as head of the organisation team two WIMA International rallies hosted by WIMA Finland. Both Rallies had been of a great success with unforgettable memories for all participants.

On international level she was elected in 2012 to take the role of the WIMA International historian, who is responsible for the WIMA archive.

Additionally she was ambassador of Finland during the Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) in 2019. Within this role she was also advertising WIMA and she was encouraging and inspiring several ladies to join WIMA.

As Pirjo is also an event producer by her profession she is well experienced in all matters coming along whilst fulfilling all those tasks in the past and still fulfilling her current position of the WIMA International Historian. We are grateful for her constant support by sharing her experience and ideas. She is of a great importance towards women in motorcycling in Finland but also internationally.

This year Pirjo celebrated her 25th Anniversary of being a member of the WIMA World.

WIMA Special Recognition Award



This is an award that can be given to individuals who are not WIMA members. This award is described in our constitution but prior to 2020 it had never been awarded to anyone.

We were many who got involved in the Women Riders World Relay and saw how the women riders' community benefited globally by the energy and enthusiasm. The attention on women riders in media and the networking that followed brought several new divisions into WIMA and new members and revived spirit into others. Trui Hanouille, at the time president of WIMA Belgium, put all this into words and formulated a proposal for the WIMA Special Recognition to be given to Hayley Bell and the admins. Her proposal was approved but with the change that they are awarded a lifetime membership in WIMA World. For this to be possible a small change in the constitution was required, as previously membership was only possible in a national division. Now membership in WIMA World can be awarded through special recognition and this is what Hayley Bell, Liv Seuring, Liza Miller, Mar Gómez García, Maria O'Reilly, Michelle Lamphere, Sara Osterholzer and Shana Sanderson were awarded in 2020.

The award was handed over by Åsa Öhqvist, international president at the time, in London at the WRWR closing ceremony. All national presidents attending the event accompanied her on stage at the hand over.





Nomination for 'Special Recognition' for Hayley Bell and the Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) admin team according to article 14 in the constitution.

Introduction:

The WRWR was founded by **Hayley Bell** (UK) and is run as a team effort by her and the admin team: **Liv Seuring** (Germany), **Liza Miller** (USA), **Mar Gómez García** (Spain), **Maria O'reilly** (Canada), **Michelle Lamphere** (USA), **Sara Osterholzer** (UK), **Shana Sanderson** (USA). Worldwide a varying group of some 200 moderators and 'taskers' also operate on a daily base.

Background:

Vision: "I wanted to ignite a global sisterhood of inspirational women to promote courage, adventure, unity and passion for biking from all corners of the world and do something that's never been done before to this scale.

Our aim is to wow the industry into realizing the global market for women in Motorsports and to inspire women world wide. I want to show the industry the force behind the market that is so blindly overlooked." — Hayley Bell

Mission: To coordinate women motorcycle riders across the world to participate in the "Women Riders World Relay", bringing fun, experience, confidence and a sense of unity to women riders globally.

Values: Be adventurous. Be courageous. Be inspiring. Be real. Be united.

[www.womenridersworldrelay.com]

Stats to date, December 2019 in Paraguay:

3250 registered riders — 70 countries — 293 days on the road — 86.500 km.

Projected: By the end of the relay in February 2020 WRWR will have covered just over 101,000 km (based on the website routing).

Motivation for the award:

The WRWR has created a virtual and physical community where women riders from all over the world can share information and build friendship. This has led to broadened horizons and solidarity between women riders worldwide.

The WRWR is the biggest international motorcycle event ever and is changing the face of motorcycling. It is effectively bringing women together globally and it has and continues to contribute to the growth of WIMA as an international association.

Countless WIMA-members across the globe —from Europe, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia to name but a few— have participated in the passage of the relay through their countries, helping WRWR with their established networks. And vice versa, the WRWR has lead to new contacts and divisions (Luxembourg, UAE and Norway amongst the first), effects which are still rippling and will continue to do so. Many members have reached out to previously unknown women riders, visiting them and riding together. This refreshing, youthful, massive sparkle has strengthened and improved WIMA noticeably.

The WRWR is run as a team effort, and WIMA-Belgium hereby proposes to honour Hayley Bell and the admin team with the 'Special Recognition' of WIMA International.

We want to express our gratitude by offering the Certificate and lifelong membership of WIMA-Belgium for each woman of this core team.

Nomination for **Special Recognition** for Hayley Bell and the Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) admin team

The proposal is included here in full, and the copyright of the photos included are as follows: Photo 1: WRWR, 2: Trui Hanouille, 3: WRWR, 4: WRWR, 5: Trui Hanouille, Dimple Chaudhary, Nirmali Nath, 6: Trui Hanouille, 7: Haider Aleez, 8: Trui Hanouille, Dimple Chaudhary, Nirmali Nath, 9: Ieva Kairiene, 10: Trui Hanouille.

Nomination for **'Special Recognition'** from WIMA for Hayley Bell and the Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) admin team



Hayley Bell and six of the admin team of WRWR (f.l.t.r.) : Liza Miller (USA), Sara Osterholzer (UK), Shana Sanderson (USA), Michelle Lamphere (USA), Liv Seuring (Germany). Missing are Maria O'reilly (Canada) and Mar Gómez García (Spain). The entire team will be present at the Final Events 14 and 15 February 2020 in London.



Hayley Bell on her bike, arriving from the start of the WRWR in Scotland 27th February 2019, at the Launch Event in London 9 March.



Hayley Bell, founder and head of WRWR



Riding the WRWR in full monsoon in Northeast India : Dimple Chaudhary (right), WIMA-India member, and Trui Hanouille, President of WIMA-Belgium



Nirmali Nath, ambassador for WRWR in Northeast India and WIMA-India member, holding the baton.



Guliyafshan Tariq, ambassador for WRWR in Pakistan, proudly holding the baton, after two weeks released from customs.



Nomination for **Special Recognition** for Hayley Bell and the Women Riders World Relay (WRWR) admin team



WRWR and WIMA combined at India-Bangladesh border (f.l.t.r.) : Trui Hanoulle (Belgium), Nirmali Nath (India), Dimple Chaudhary (India).



WRWR passing through Lithuania. Central behind the row with the flag is Jolita Arlauskaitė, the WRWR-ambassador for Lithuania, and holding the case with the baton in red T-shirt is Loreta Lilienė, President of WIMA-Lithuania.

Transfer of the baton at border Luxembourg-Belgium with a little dance.



WIMA Supported Organisations and Charities

When WIMA first started, the focus was on getting together as women riders around the world, first to race together but also to have fun. The fun element has remained, but over the years, WIMA members have been looking beyond our own community, making efforts to help others, especially women, less fortunate than ourselves. This has been either within a division's own country or further afield. It's a long-standing tradition that many of us feel is important.

Helping WIMA Ukraine help their community

Recent world events have come sharply into focus for our members. Russia's war with Ukraine has now been going on for over three years (as of 2025). When it first started, WIMA International decided to help support Ukraine, via our then new WIMA Ukraine division. Please see the Ukraine entry in the WIMA divisions section for details. The money we raised is used to help children, women and isolated older people.

Pikilily/MJ Piki

WIMA International has supported Pikilily since it was started in 2016. Pikilily is a Tanzanian project which GB member Claire Elsdon set up when she moved to Mwanza. The purpose of this social enterprise is to empower, equip and train local Tanzanian women to ride and maintain motorcycles. The aim was for these women to become motorcycle safety champions in their local communities, while also gently challenging stereotypes about what women can do.

Claire writes: The operating arm of Pikilily is MJ Piki, whose full name in KiSwahili is 'Mwanamke Jasiri ya Pikipiki' or 'Brave woman on a motorbike' – a name the Tanzanian women chose. MJ Piki is officially registered locally as a CBO or Community Based Organisation.

The concept behind the project is to improve general road safety. Since cheap Chinese motorcycles started to flood the market in Tanzania (and much of Africa) over the last couple of decades, motorcycles have been used mainly by young, unskilled and unemployed men who ride them as taxis for transporting local people and parcels within towns and cities across the continent. Most riders never formally learn any riding skills of any kind, which leads to a typical probability of a crash in a year around 69%. This leads to devastating results for riders and their dependents, usually wives and children.

Pikilily began building a workshop in late 2016 and were thrilled not only to be visited by WIMA members Sheonagh Ravensdale and Pat Thomson on the site, but also supported by a substantial £5000 grant from WIMA to help establish the project. Since then, WIMA France and WIMA GB have shown huge generosity in fundraising more than £1500 to continue to train women riders and amplify our impact. Amounts were also boosted by former International President Åsa Öhqvist also donating a significant birthday fund in 2016. There have also been notable fundraising events at several international rallies, including memorable auctions in 2023 and 2024 by the Australians which raised several hundred euros.

Since inception, the MJ Piki project has trained eleven women to ride, and we have six women still with our project who provide regular safety training sessions to school groups as well as motorcycle taxi riders. MJ Piki has directly trained over 5000 Tanzanians in the last three years and was delighted to partner with UK charity Transaid in 2021 to script and present the first professionally recorded motorcycle safety training materials set in Africa and presented by African women. This material is currently available in English, Hausa and KiSwahili. You can watch the full video in English here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcgmObaRpA8>



Photo ©Trui Hanoulle

Pikilily has taken the specific safety modules demonstrated by the MJ Piki women and split them into two-minute sections that can be shared freely across Africa, through WhatsApp on smartphones. Two MJ Piki women, Catherine and Jackie, have recently been touring Tanzania giving well-received presentations to police forces and other community groups. They are showcasing vitally important road safety messages while subtly also showcasing what women can do.

The WIMA India Street Kids Project

The first charity that WIMA International participated in was the WIMA India Street Kids Project, when a scroll was sent round the world in 2005 and 2006 for members to sign and make donations. This and other activities, including the first ever all-female firewalk, by supporters both inside and outside WIMA, raised £35,000 for a shelter for girls at risk in Mumbai.



National Projects

Here are a few of the other charities and NGOs (non-governmental organisations) our members are involved in: **WIMA Australia** has done several fundraising events for breast cancer charities. Members in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Canberra areas either started or organised and took part in the very popular Pink Ribbon Rides over several years. In 1996, some WIMA members accompanied breast cancer survivors at certain points in the epic Riding the Fenceline – a ride around Australia, which raised funds and awareness across the country.



WIMA GB has supported many projects over the years, most notably the WIMA India Street Kids Project.

WIMA Estonia has been supporting the Children’s Centre ‘Tähetorni’, since 2009. This provides children from low-income families with a safe environment to spend their free time. We visit children each month to cook with them or to do some crafts and some members help kids with schoolwork. We regularly donate money collected through different charity sales and each year we organise an event for kids to ride with us; we also invite other motorbike clubs as well.



WIMA Ghana regularly help organise screening of women for breast and cervical cancer.

WIMA Japan are keen supporters of the ‘Love the Earth’ initiative by motorcyclists to protect the Earth. A symbolic event of Love the Earth is the biannual beach clean-up meeting, but you can show the spirit by picking up one piece of trash at any touring destination. <https://www.lovetheearth.jp/> (Japanese only)



WIMA Luxembourg members ride with other motorcyclists supporting people with autism and children fighting cancer, children with special needs and in support of SOS Children's Village in Luxembourg.

WIMA Mexico organises events like giving away gifts for kids at Christmas and gathering food for the needy.

WIMA Nepal recently raised funds for members to ride to Upper Mustang to distribute sanitary products and school materials to young women and girls.

WIMA New Zealand has supported the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation, by organising and running the very popular Pink Ribbon rides. Starting in 2006 and lasting until 2018, WIMA members in the Wellington and Auckland areas, plus other bike clubs, joined in the rides and by the end, they had raised close to A\$120,000. Over the years, WIMA Wellington has also supported other charities, including Women's Refuge and Books for Kids.

WIMA Nicaragua works to motivate, encourage and break traditional roles that are socially assigned to women.

WIMA Romania organises an annual PINK Ride campaign, aiming to raise funds and increase awareness of breast cancer. It is widely supported by the male motorcycle community as well.

WIMA Sweden allocates 20 sek (about 2 euros) per member each year which supports a project that the members choose. In addition, we have supported MJ Piki, most notably by the WRWR Ripple Relay collection and we have regular collections to support our sisters in WIMA Ukraine.



APPENDIX AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful thanks are due to Louise Hillier for the design, and all those WIMA members, both present and past, who contributed reports, memories, clarifications and photos for the whole of this book.

We especially thank the following for their work on the rally section: sub-editors Elke Koepping (research and writing), Caroline Lunnon (translations and writing), Tiffany Coates and Jo Marlin for writing, and Erika Pepe for translations. Photos prior to 1974 are from the WIMA archives and we have no details of who took them.

We would also like to thank the following for proofreading: Margaret Stewart, Moira Stewart, Tiffany Coates, Jo Marlin, Katy Wade, and Carrie Arnold.

If we have not credited your photo(s) with your name, apologies, and please do tell us so it can be rectified in the next edition.

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- 2005 – Sweden:** report by Anita Paulsson and Åsa Öhqvist. Photos: WIMA Sweden.
- 2005 – New Zealand:** report by Yvonne Forrest, WIMA New Zealand, with additional information from Åsa Öhqvist. Photos: Åsa Öhqvist, Sheonagh Ravensdale and others.
- 2006 – Switzerland:** Newspaper article, 'Töff-Ladys weilen im Ybrig' Einsiedler Anzeiger. Invitation International WIMA Rally. ROUGH NOTES ON SWISS RALLY By Ann Weir, WIMA News September 2006, pp. 20-21. Photos: Betty Manz.
- 2007 – Germany:** report by Verena Reindl, WIMA Germany. Photos: WIMA Germany.
- 2008 – Finland:** report by Ninnair Nurmi, WIMA Finland. Photos: Trui Hanoulle.
- 2009 – Italy:** report by Monika Greiderer, WIMA Germany. Photos: Bernadette Hanekamp.
- 2009 – USA:** report by Alice Sexton, WIMA USA. Photos: Alice Sexton and WIMA Japan.
- 2010 – Japan:** report by Keiko Osawa, WIMA Japan, with additional information from Sheonagh Ravensdale and Åsa Öhqvist. Photos: WIMA Japan and Åsa Öhqvist.
- 2010 – The Netherlands:** report by Jos Beerstecher, WIMA Netherlands. Photos: WIMA Netherlands.
- 2011 – England:** report by Val Newman, WIMA GB. Photos by Widge Thorpe and others.
- 2012 – Austria:** report by Michaela Sanda, WIMA Austria. Photos: WIMA Austria.
- 2013 – Switzerland:** report by Åsa Öhqvist. Photos: Betty Manz and Åsa Öhqvist.
- 2014 – Poland:** report by Ann Weir. Photos: Robert Janiszewski.
- 2015 – Sweden:** report by Anita Paulsson and Åsa Öhqvist. Photos: Åsa Öhqvist.
- 2015 – Australia:** report by Moira Stewart, WIMA Australia. Photos: WIMA Australia.
- 2016 – Hungary:** report by Margaret Stewart, WIMA Australia. Photos: Margaret Stewart, Zara Strange and others.
- 2017 – Estonia:** report by WIMA Estonia. Photos: Hannes Arus.
- 2018 – Finland:** reports by WIMA Finland, Barbara McEvoy, WIMA Australia and Trui Hanoulle WIMA Belgium. Photos: Trui Hanoulle, Jedi Seppänen.
- 2019 – England:** report by Val Newman, WIMA GB. Photos by Tiffany Coates, Val Newman and Åsa Öhqvist.
- 2019 – Curaçao:** report and photos by Rita Koopmanschaap, WIMA Curaçao.
- 2020 – Germany:** cancelled due to Covid pandemic, report and photos by Susi Metzner, WIMA Germany.
- 2021 – The Netherlands:** cancelled due to Covid pandemic, report and photos by Sandra Ilbrink, WIMA Netherlands.
- 2022 – Switzerland:** report by Eva Streuli, WIMA Switzerland, WIMA International Newsletter, with additional information from Ann Weir. Photos: Fokje Copinga and Lorraine Thomas.
- 2023 – France:** report by Marie Delestré and Chantal Hertrich, WIMA France. Photos: Kaarin Keski-Korhonen, Sheonagh Ravensdale and others.
- 2024 – Romania:** report by Mihaela Hodoivanu, Photos by Cristina Constantinescu.
- 2024 – Australia:** report by Lee Skinner with additional information by Kathy O'Donnell, WIMA Australia. Photos: Angie Trevaskis, WIMA Australia and Michelle Lamphere, WIMA USA.



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