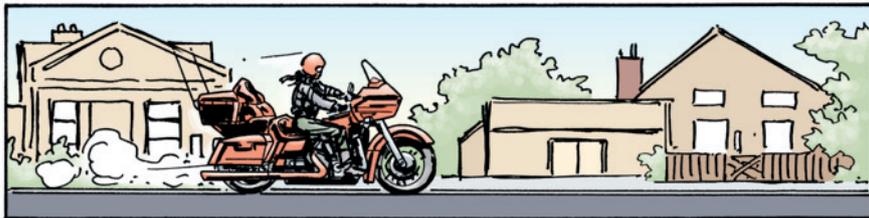


Aunt Bessie's PM Tale!



REGARDS,
BESSIE
SPRINGFIELD
1944



GOOD TO SEE YOU, UNCLE TED. MOM SAID YOU WANTED TO SEE ME AS SOON AS I GOT BACK.

TILLIE! WELCOME HOME.



MY GOODNESS... TWENTY YEARS IN THE ARMY. THAT'S A LONG TIME.

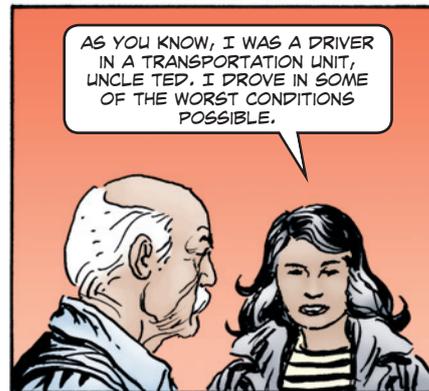
YOU SHOULD KNOW. YOU SPENT MORE THAN TWENTY PLUS YEARS ON THAT TRAIL.



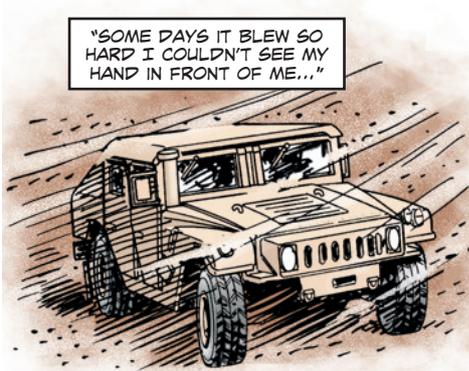
YES, I DID. MY TRAIL TOOK ME THROUGH VIETNAM...



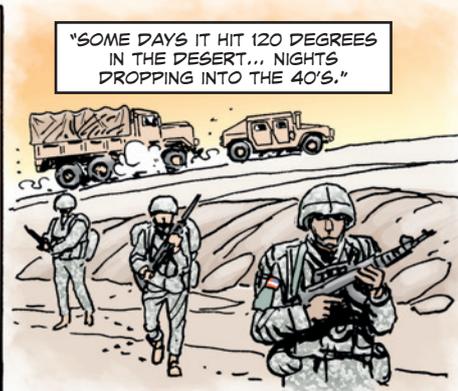
...TELL ME MORE ABOUT IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN.



AS YOU KNOW, I WAS A DRIVER IN A TRANSPORTATION UNIT, UNCLE TED. I DROVE IN SOME OF THE WORST CONDITIONS POSSIBLE.



"SOME DAYS IT BLEW SO HARD I COULDN'T SEE MY HAND IN FRONT OF ME..."



"SOME DAYS IT HIT 120 DEGREES IN THE DESERT... NIGHTS DROPPING INTO THE 40'S."



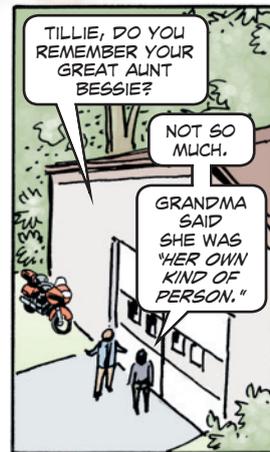
I GOT TO KNOW MY PMCS SO WELL, I COULD DO IT IN MY SLEEP!



A GOOD SOLDIER HAS TO MAINTAIN HER EQUIPMENT.

I LIKE YOUR WAY OF THINKING.

COME INTO THE GARAGE. THERE'S SOMETHING I THINK YOU'LL APPRECIATE.



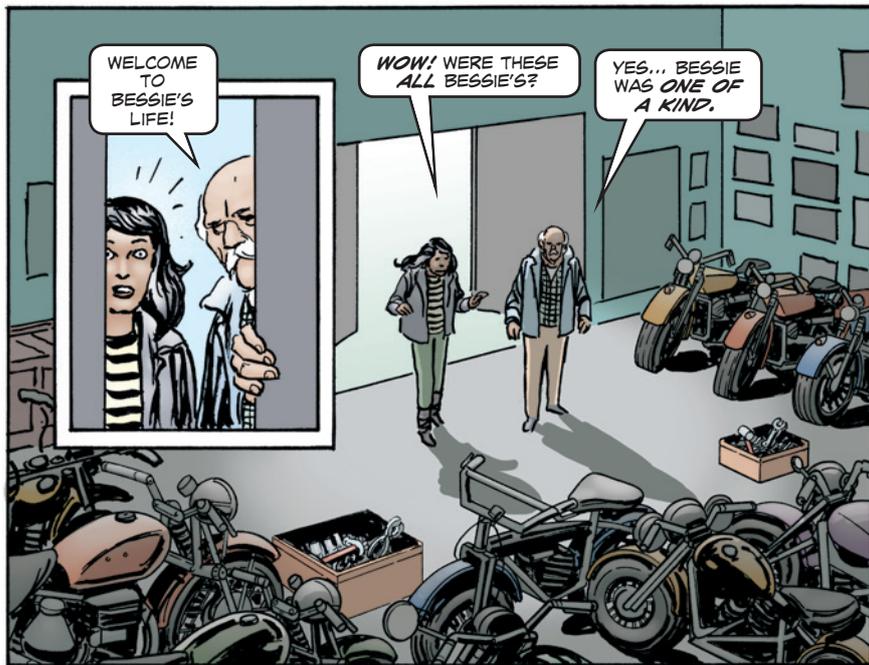
TILLIE, DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR GREAT AUNT BESSIE?

NOT SO MUCH.

GRANDMA SAID SHE WAS "HER OWN KIND OF PERSON."



THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT. HER LIFE WAS THE STUFF OF WHICH LEGENDS ARE MADE.



WELCOME TO BESSIE'S LIFE!

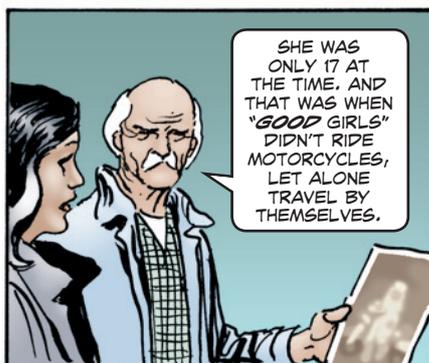
WOW! WERE THESE ALL BESSIE'S?

YES... BESSIE WAS ONE OF A KIND.

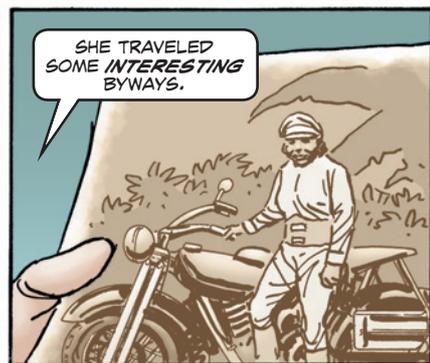


LOOK AT ALL THESE BIKES! AND ALL THESE TOOL BOXES.

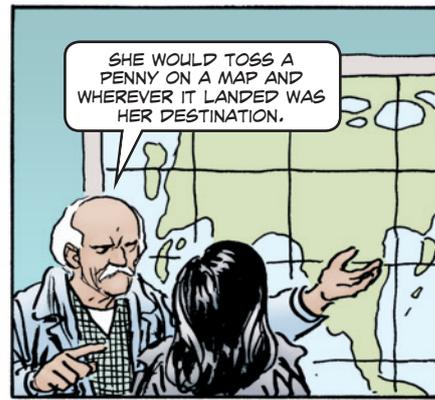
AUNT BESSIE RODE HER FIRST MOTORCYCLE -- AN INDIAN SCOUT -- BACK IN 1928.



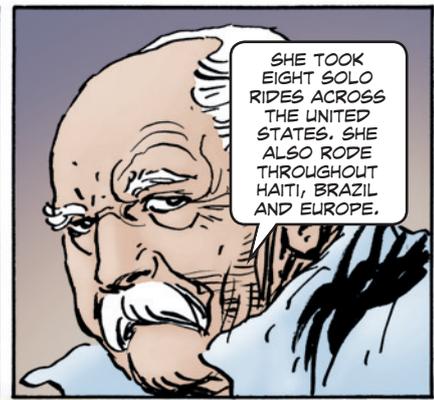
SHE WAS ONLY 17 AT THE TIME, AND THAT WAS WHEN "GOOD GIRLS" DIDN'T RIDE MOTORCYCLES, LET ALONE TRAVEL BY THEMSELVES.



SHE TRAVELED SOME INTERESTING BYWAYS.



SHE WOULD TOSS A PENNY ON A MAP AND WHEREVER IT LANDED WAS HER DESTINATION.



SHE TOOK EIGHT SOLO RIDES ACROSS THE UNITED STATES. SHE ALSO RODE THROUGHOUT HAITI, BRAZIL AND EUROPE.



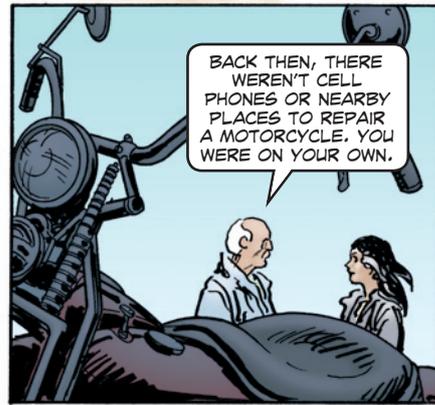
"SHE RODE IN RAINSTORMS..."



"SLEPT IN A TENT NEXT TO HER BIKE..."



"...AND ALWAYS DID PM ON HER BIKE."



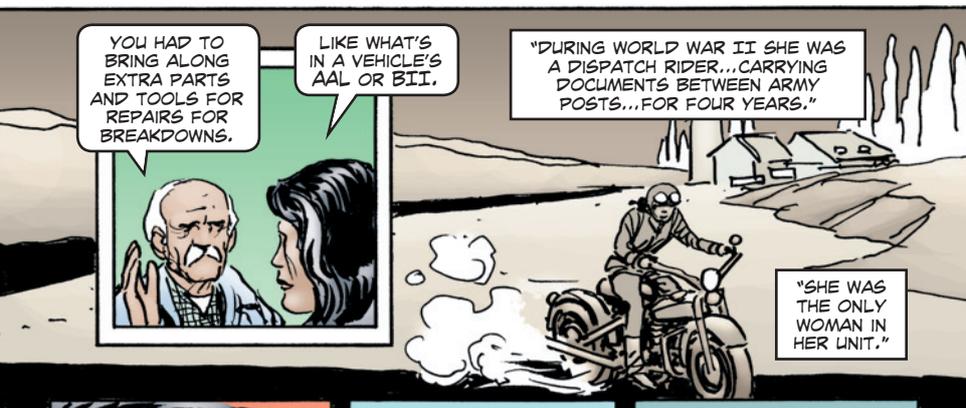
BACK THEN, THERE WEREN'T CELL PHONES OR NEARBY PLACES TO REPAIR A MOTORCYCLE. YOU WERE ON YOUR OWN.



THAT MEANT YOU HAD TO KNOW THE BIKE'S CHECKS AND SERVICES LIKE THE BACK OF YOUR HAND.

CHECKS AND SERVICES!

THAT RINGS A BELL.



YOU HAD TO BRING ALONG EXTRA PARTS AND TOOLS FOR REPAIRS FOR BREAKDOWNS.

LIKE WHAT'S IN A VEHICLE'S AAL OR BII.

"DURING WORLD WAR II SHE WAS A DISPATCH RIDER...CARRYING DOCUMENTS BETWEEN ARMY POSTS...FOR FOUR YEARS."

"SHE WAS THE ONLY WOMAN IN HER UNIT."



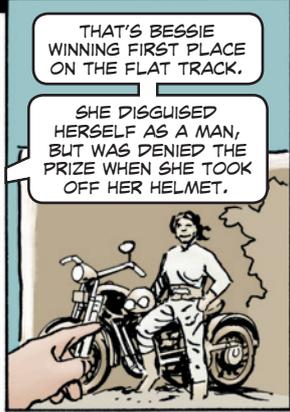
Presented To
BESSIE STRINGFIELD
By The
AMERICAN MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATION (AMA)
and **HEROES OF HARLEY DAVIDSON**



HMM...THAT SOUNDS KIND OF LIKE *ME* WHEN I GOT STARTED.



AFTER THE WAR SHE WENT ON AND FOUNDED THE "IRON HORSE MOTORCYCLE CLUB" IN MIAMI.



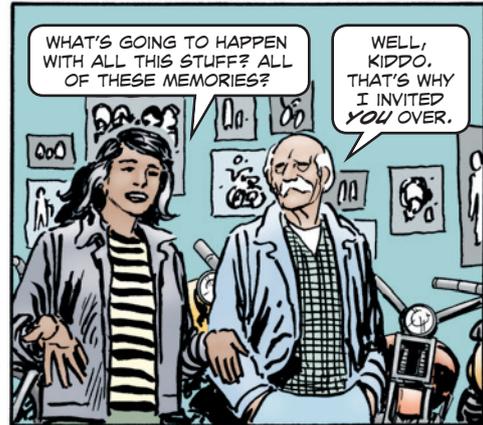
THAT'S BESSIE WINNING FIRST PLACE ON THE FLAT TRACK.

SHE DISGUISED HERSELF AS A MAN, BUT WAS DENIED THE PRIZE WHEN SHE TOOK OFF HER HELMET.



"I WAS THERE WHEN SHE GOT THE AWARD. SEVERAL YEARS LATER THE AMA CREATED THE *BESSIE STRINGFIELD MEMORIAL AWARD.*"

"AFTER HER PASSING, SHE WAS INDUCTED INTO THE *MOTORCYCLE HALL OF FAME.*"



WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN WITH ALL THIS STUFF? ALL OF THESE MEMORIES?

WELL, KIDDO. THAT'S WHY I INVITED *YOU* OVER.



TOWARDS THE END OF HER LIFE THE DOCTORS WANTED HER TO GIVE UP RIDING. SHE SAID, IF I DON'T *RIDE*, I WON'T *LIVE* LONG...

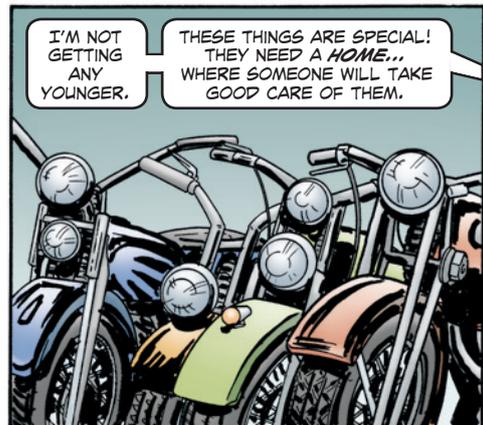


LOOK AT ALL THIS.

YES, IT'S IMPRESSIVE. NOW TAKE A LOOK AT *THIS.*

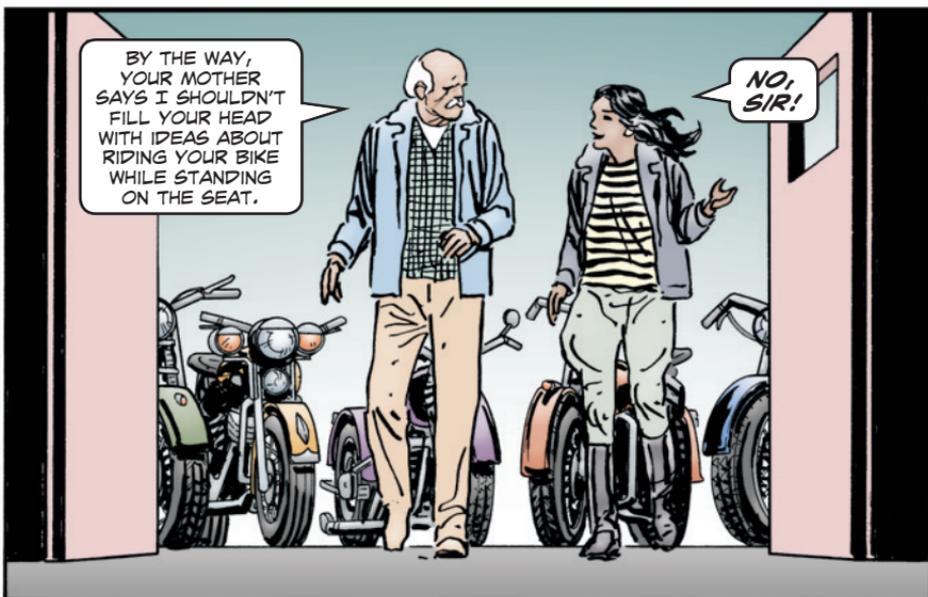
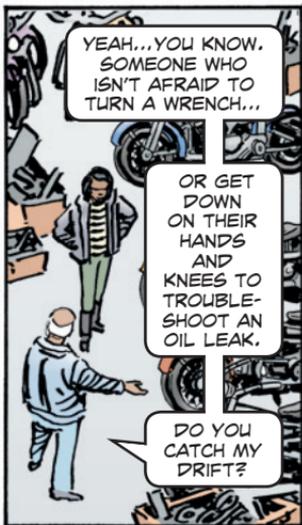


YOUR GREAT AUNT BESSIE RECEIVED THIS AWARD TWO YEARS BEFORE HER DEATH IN 1993. SHE WAS 32 YEARS OLD.



I'M NOT GETTING ANY YOUNGER.

THESE THINGS ARE SPECIAL! THEY NEED A *HOME*... WHERE SOMEONE WILL TAKE GOOD CARE OF THEM.



UNCLE TED AND TILLIE ARE FICTITIOUS, BUT BESSIE WAS VERY REAL!

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AMAZING *BESSIE STRINGFIELD*, SEE THE FOLLOWING ENTRIES ON THE AMA HALL OF FAME AND HARLEY-DAVIDSON WEBSITES:

<http://motorcyclemuseum.org/halloffame/detail.aspx?racerID=277>

AND

http://www.harley-davidson.com/en_us/content/pages/women-riders/female-trailblazers.html

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