

Interview with author *Alan Johnson*

Motorbooks.com: Is pinstriping a lost art?

Alan Johnson: *Pinstriping in one form or another has been adorning vehicles since the advent of the wheel. As the wheel evolved, so has the art form. Through automotive style changes and consumer tastes, pinstriping has always been part of our culture. The hot rod "Kustom Kulture" has never stopped its love affair with pinstriping. Today this unique American art form made popular by the legendary Von Dutch, Ed "Big Daddy" Roth and others is gaining acceptability in art galleries and art collectors throughout the world.*

Motorbooks.com: How did you learn?

Alan Johnson: *I saw Ed "Big Daddy" Roth striping a car at a New York City Auto show. As a 12-year-old kid I had always loved to draw pictures, but this inspirational encounter with Roth, changed or twisted me into a motor head for life! I learned from the most unforgiving teachers "Trial & Error", but my unstoppable determination allowed me to experiment with all types of paints and brushes to arrive at a greater understanding of these materials, than if I were handed all the right supplies at first.*

Motorbooks.com: Why are you sharing your secrets with others?

Alan Johnson: *I have been blessed with a successful business doing what I want, when I want, for more years than I can recall. I am grateful to have pinstriped some of the most fascinating, classic vehicles for the most interesting and generous people I could ever dream of. I live by and believe "To whom much is given, much is expected".*

Motorbooks.com: What satisfaction do you get in teaching others?

Alan Johnson: *There is no greater thrill than seeing a light go on in a young person's eye, as they are inspired to go for what they love! I have been fortunate to have experienced this many times, as I show a kid a painting technique, or use a brush or material that removes a difficult stumbling block that is hindering their path to a dream. I love to involve an interested young unsuspecting bystander while working at a busy car show. I ask them to hold the palette and follow me around the car as I paint. Soon I see their concentration shifts to the brush and how it is being used. That person has just learned several years' worth of information, without a spoken word. After all, I was that kid watching someone once. Sometime I wonder where those people are today, you will never know how a bit of caring will effect a person.*

Motorbooks.com: How long have you been pinstriping?

Alan Johnson: *I'll be 61 in April and I started playing with the brush at 12, so I guess long time.*

Motorbooks.com: What have you pinstriped?

Alan Johnson: *I have pinstriped cars that I never knew existed, everything from classic Duesenbergs to top fuel dragsters, from historic hot rods to hip hop Hondas. I have striped countless cars that reside in museums and private collections all over the country. Many of these beautiful restorations have won prestigious awards such as the Pebble Beach Concourse d'Elegance First in Class, Best of Show etc.*

Motorbooks.com: What is your favorite piece of work that you have created?

Alan Johnson: *My favorite piece is the next one that I will do. I love the discovery process involved in preparing a vehicle for pinstriping; it is as if you were the original pinstriper that first worked on the car. You must go through the same thinking process.*

Motorbooks.com: Would you consider yourself a pinstriping expert?

Alan Johnson: *I discover something new everydady or on each classic car I am privileged to work on, therefore I don't consider too many people, including myself, an expert on the subject. I have been doing this for many years and have had great success; I can only offer my large body of work as examples of what I believe to be a correct representation of pinstriping.*

Motorbooks.com: What do you bring to a project where others may hail you as an expert?

Alan Johnson: *I know where the lines should be drawn as soon as my fingers touch the surface of an antique/classic or hot rod. I know what colors that successfully express the automobile and owners personalities*

Motorbooks.com: What sets this book apart from others on the market?

Alan Johnson: *There is more to pinstriping than making straight lines, you need a proper respect for the vehicles history. My book is what I have found to be the correct way to approach and execute pinstriping.*

An interview with *Alan Johnson*, the author of *How to Pinstripe* , Motorbooks, ISBN 0760327491 All rights reserved.