

Cris Sommer-Simmons

In the historically male-dominated world of motorcycling no one has more passion for motorcycles than Cris. She has enjoyed a lifetime love affair with two wheels. An eager passenger on her step-father's motorcycle at age 9, she rode her first motorcycle solo at 14, got her first Harley at age 19 and has been riding ever since. She was a longtime member of the *Women's International Motorcycle Association* and in 1984, co-founded the 2nd Chapter of *Women in the Wind*. A year later, in 1985 she co-founded the world's first motorcycle magazine for women called *Harley Women*. For over 5 years she acted as co-publisher and editor, often riding her motorcycle across the country to find the stories. On one such ride in 1989 she met her husband-to-be, rocker and fellow motorcycle enthusiast, Doobie Brother Patrick Simmons.

For several years in the late 80's Cris appeared in countless national newspaper articles, radio and television talk shows as a representative and advocate of the growing number of women who rode their own motorcycles. In 1988, she was awarded an Honorary Lifetime membership to *Women in The Wind*. Cris is a 23 year *AMA* member, a Lifetime *HOG* member as well as a *Motor Maid*. In 1990, she was honored as a pioneering woman motorcyclist in the *American Motorcycle Associations' Women In Motorcycling* exhibit in the *AMA's* museum in Westerville, OH.

After selling her interest in *Harley Women*, Cris began a 15 year stint as a freelance motorcycle journalist, writing extensively for several magazines in the U.S., including *American Iron*, *Motorcycle Collector*, *Iron Works*, *Easyriders*, *V-Twin* to name a few, as well as magazines in Japan, Spain and in Australia. Cris also penned her own column for over 12 years in the popular Japanese Harley magazine *Hot Bike Japan*.

In 1994, Cris wrote and self-published the award winning children's motorcycle book *Patrick Wants to Ride*, for which she was honored with the *AMA's Brighter Image MVP Award*. The book is in its 3rd printing and has sold over 12,000 copies.

In 1995, Cris was one of 4 women featured in an original documentary on women motorcyclists for *Turner Broadcasting* called *Biker Women*. This well received show set viewing records for an original documentary for that year.

In 2003, Cris was proud to be inducted into the *National Motorcycle Hall of Fame* in Anamosa Iowa and the *American Motorcycle Heritage Foundation Motorcycle Hall of Fame* in Westerville, Ohio. In 2008 she was inducted into the *Sturgis Motorcycle Hall of Fame*.

Cris has co-written a screenplay about women motorcyclists and is currently working on the book entitled, '*The American Motorcycle Girls 1900-1950*', which will be published in mid-May 2009 by Parker House Publishing. Cris is hard at work directing and producing a documentary film of the same subject as her current book.

She currently rides a 1988 Harley-Davidson Heritage and a 1934 Harley-Davidson VLD. She resides in Maui Hawaii with her husband Pat and has three children, Lindsey, Josh and Patrick.