

March 2014

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

Official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc. Lexington, Kentucky
MOA #146 RA #4-49 <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>



Awards Banquet March 29th Chop House

**2640 Richmond Rd.
Lexington**

**Food
Drink
Awards
Recognitions
Secret Club Stuff**

**5:30 p.m. Social Hour
6:30 p.m. Dinner**



Battling older age with a new seat

By Paul Elwyn

Age wasn't an issue for me until I turned 65 in December.

With no health crisis that I am aware of, beyond my weight and an enlarged prostate, age 65 shouldn't be weighing so heavily on my mind. Harlan Sanders, after all, didn't begin his chicken empire until his 70's, and Vice President Joe Biden sees no reason to worry about beginning his first term as President at the age of 74.

So this age thing at this point is mostly a mental issue, one of many confronting me these days.

One of the benefits of older age and retirement is that you have more voice in what your world is. My world, despite the relentless print and broadcast noise, remains fairly well fo-

cused, centered around Maureen, primarily, with church, cars, and motorcycles filling what little cerebral capacity remains.

From that short list, motorcycles remain a significant part of who I am, so any related issue colors my day.

Last night, while waiting to convey my condolences to family members of the most recent friend to have died, I was greeted by my former family physician, a good fellow but one with an extremely invasive digital prostate exam demeanor, who asked if I were still riding motorcycles. He had been a casual rider, more of an owner than a rider, who has decided to give it up.

I answered that I still was riding. He raised an eyebrow and advised that I will not fall



Awards Banquet
March 29th
Chop House, Lexington
5:30 p.m. Social Hour
6:30 p.m. Dinner

as well as I did 31 years ago, recalling the mishap in which I totaled my first BMW.

I conceded that possibility, and added that where once my greatest riding anxiety beyond my own skill set centered on deer, I now regard cell phone drivers as the threat foremost on my mind, next to my prostate. He smiled and moved on. I

lingered on that last note.

Being among the 1,200 people (seriously) waiting to visit with grieving family members, I had plenty of time to reflect. Earlier in the day I had stumbled across a 1999 *Cycle World* test of the new R1100S, lingering over the photos of the machine stripped of its plastic. I vividly recalled the test and the

Apex is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc.
Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #4-49

Paul Elwyn, Editor paul.elwyn@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

Back issues of Apex can be accessed at <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>

Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd.
on any Saturday, 7-9:00 a.m.

Battling older age with a new seat

photos, which have remained in my database since 1999.

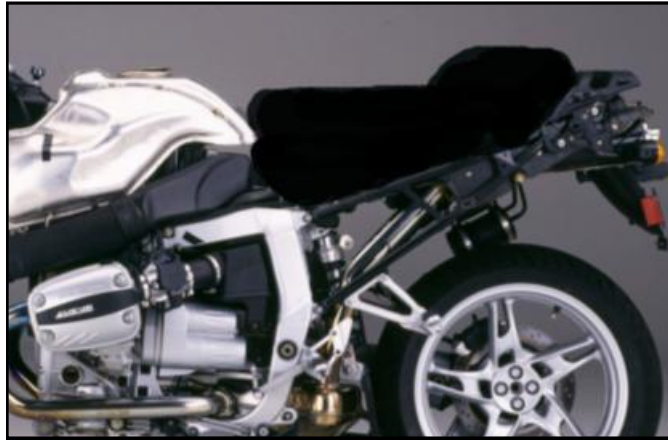
Thirteen years down the road, I finally bought a 1999 R1100S, and one of the first things I did was a routine service, which of course requires plastic removal. I still find the stripped 1100S to be remarkably appealing, although industrial, since BMW did not intend for the bike to run around naked and left all sorts of purposeful components revealed without regard for aesthetics.

So with absolute editorial autonomy, I post in this *Apex* three photos of the naked R1100S, because I want to do so, and no one looks at this stuff, anyway.

If one squints eyes, pours another glass of wine, and ponders, the image is quite inspiring. I have awakened at night from a wonderful mental image of me riding the naked 1100S with bags and camping gear packed, the alloy tank gleaming in the sunlight, the lone instrument, an R100R tachometer mounted dead center, holding steady at 3,500 rpm. Of course, I weigh only 200 pounds in this dream, and my hair waves in the wind from underneath my full-face helmet as I head toward Mid-Ohio.

Cycle World's Peter Egan still regards the R1100S as the ideal sport touring motorcycle, relatively light, capable of high-speed cross-continent two-up travel in relative comfort.

After 8,000 miles on my 1100S, I found myself battling prostatitis following a short run to Asheville last May for the RA national rally. A 700-mile round trip should be a piece of cake, but I spent much of the summer recovering, and avoiding the 1100S. So I bought the air-ride solo police seat attached to a Harley to continue riding while I try to make the



Coachcraft is building a new seat for the R1100S. It *might* look better than this.

1100S palatable.

Which brings me back to the issue of age. So many motorcycles appeal to me, but most have seats designed for young men. I guess not all older men have prostate issues, but many do; seems to me that any manufacturer seriously interested in maximizing the market for their latest model, would build a seat that is prostate friendly.

My fist prostatitis encounter occurred the day after riding 40 miles from Lexington to Danville on a new 2002 Moto Guzzi V11 LeMans. While recovering and unable to ride, I peeled back the seat cover, hacksawed the nose of the seat to create a flat seating surface minus the prostate-invading hump. Very simple, Mr. Moto Guzzi. This modification served well for the next 38,000 miles until I was tempted by another machine, an 1150 GS, I believe, which with a Sargent seat served well despite the stupid transmission.

So today I ponder the naked 1100S, a semi-modern, alloy-tanked sporting twin (now in my hands with taller superbike handlebar by Spiegler), awaiting some tweaking, and a new seat, of course.

I have browsed the candidates: Sargent, Saddlemen, Corbin, Rich's, Rick Mayer, and Airhawk R, a whoopee cushion specifically designed to address sensitive parts of the body. The cushion, of course, appears to be what it is, a lumpy air bladder strapped to the seat. I guess when riding, it doesn't matter that it looks awful. But I still want my motorcycle to look good when I'm not riding it, which may be the only way one of my motorcycles can look good.

So I decided to give Coachcraft in Lexington the opportunity to protect my prostate. By the time you read this...or don't read this, I should be putting miles on the \$600 rebuilt seat to see if I become, once, again, compromised and dependent on another six-week treatment with medication while unable to ride.

If Coachcraft fails, I'll continue on the air-ride solo seat and likely sell the BMW to someone who doesn't need 190 bhp and who has no prostate issues. If Coachcraft succeeds, I'll likely use the R1100S for much of my summer travel.

I continue to mull over age 65. Some travel, prostate will-

ing, might help me confront my age.

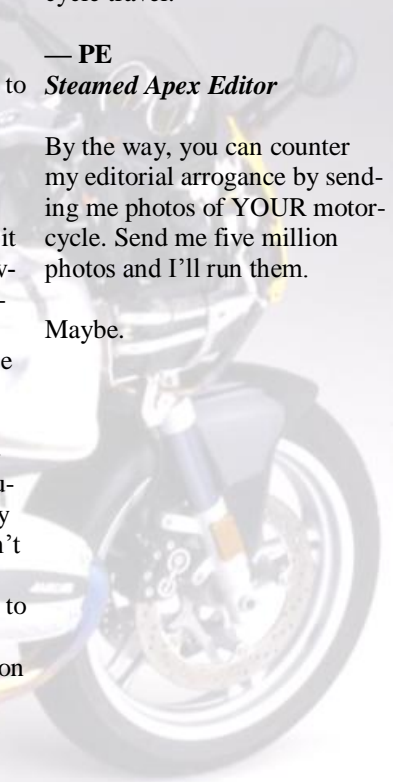
For some reason I have a hankering to visit Sturgis in August, either on the air-ride solo or on the Coachcraft device if it works. Seems more appropriate to motor among the loud-pipes-save-lives crowd on a whisper-quiet BMW that makes more power than the baddest factory Harley, a truth likely only I would savor, everyone else sneering at my ugly nerd bike, I imagine.

Travel, then, is part of my anti-aging plan, anyway, and I encourage everyone to pull out the maps and begin reserving dates for this season of motorcycle travel.

— PE
Steamed Apex Editor

By the way, you can counter my editorial arrogance by sending me photos of YOUR motorcycle. Send me five million photos and I'll run them.

Maybe.



My Motorcycling History

Text and photos by Jonathan McKeown

I bought my first motorcycle the spring of my Junior year of college.

My dad had been riding cruisers for a while (a VStar 1100, then VStar 1300 - both purchased from Mitch at I-75 Yamaha), so we decided we'd go look and see if there was a cruiser down there that I would like.

My dad and I jumped in my BMW E30, and off to Richmond we went. I looked around at some of the cruisers, but none of them really spoke to me. Mitch pointed out a new model from Yamaha, a 600cc fully-faired standard bike and I was hooked. Next thing I knew, I was following my dad home, him on the FZ6R, and me in the E30.



Yamaha FZ6R

I had a great season of riding, but was rear-ended the next spring, so I sold off the bike to help get into a nicer car - an E36 M3.

The M3 was a BLAST to drive - so much so that I barely missed the bike the whole season, but as a funny twist of fate, I ended up selling the M3 back to the guy I bought it from - and at a profit! I ended up back in the E30 and very much in want of a motorcycle again.

Fast forward to November of 2012. My dad was just as anxious as I was to get me back on two wheels since it was something we really enjoyed doing together. After many a night sifting through Craigslist ads, dad and I stumbled upon a great deal on a 2007 FZ6.

I rode it through the winter and the majority of 2013 until a fellow musician let me know he was selling his bike - a 2001 R1100R.

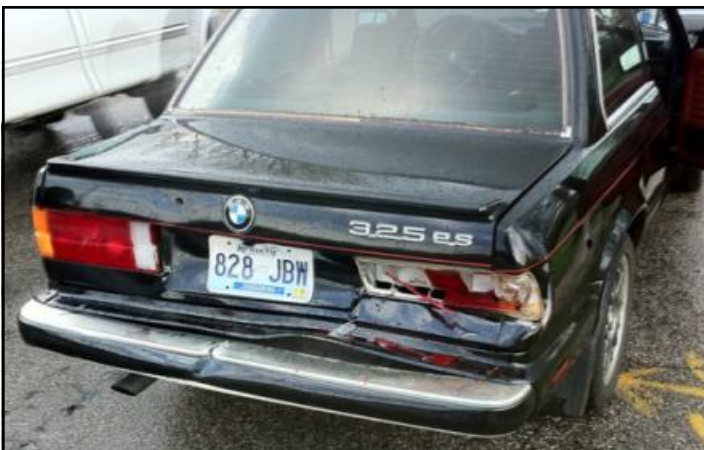
I immediately JUMPED at the chance to go see it as I'd always lusted after the naked R bikes. One test ride and I was hooked - but wanted to have the bike checked over before I bought it. My dad got in touch with Ray at The Kickstand (who he knew to be a "Beemer"



Jonathan McKeown with his 2001 R1100R

guy), who put us in touch with Roy (who seems to enjoy

Beemers as well, as I've come to find out!), and the rest is



Crunched BMW E30



BMW E36 M3

My Motorcycling History

By Jonathan McKeown

history.

I always enjoyed riding on the Yamahas, but there is something very different about the Beemer. The best way I can think to describe it is riding the Yami's was riding an incredible machine, but riding the Beemer is like riding with your best friend. The silly little quirks, the rumble of the boxer twin, all of it adds up to motorcycling bliss for me.

I feel very blessed to have stumbled into such a great collection of like-minded enthusiasts and can't wait to get to

know everyone more in the years to come!

I included some pictures of our fall trip out to the Jefferson area of North Carolina. We had some great rides on the Blue Ridge Parkway and had a wonderful time camping at Raccoon Holler Campground.

Below: View at Raccoon Holler Campground, North Carolina

Right: Scenic view on Blue Ridge Parkway



“Riding the Beemer is like riding with your best friend.

The silly little quirks, the rumble of the boxer twin, all of it adds up to motorcycling bliss for me. I feel very blessed to have stumbled into such a great collection of like-minded enthusiasts.”

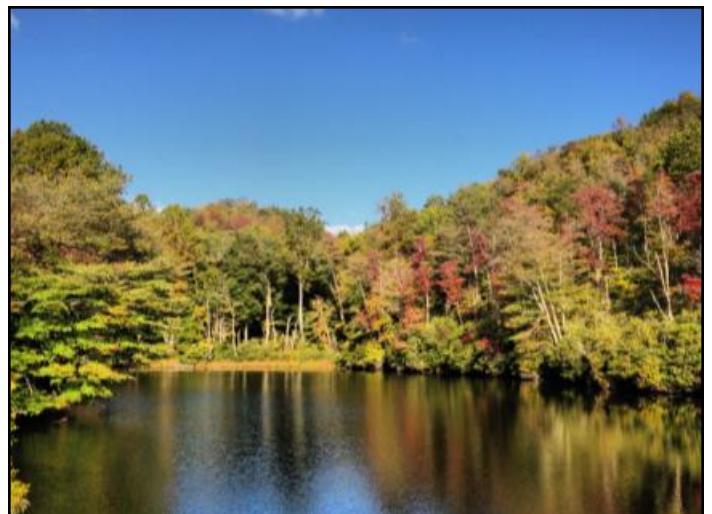
— Jonathan McKeown



Above: Lee and Jonathan McKeown on the Blue Ridge Parkway
—Photo by Steve Breen

My Motorcycling History

By Jonathan McKeown



Kickstand Polar Bear Run draws 205 riders



An unusually pleasant day with 60-degree temperatures and sunshine drew 205 riders to the 2014 Polar Bear Run sponsored by The Kickstand in Burgin on February 22.

Registrants paid \$10 to cover Chili and drinks at Bellacino's in Brannon Crossing at the end of the run. Kickstand owner and Bluegrass Beemers member Raymond Montgomery led the ride on his BMW K1200 LT.

Raymond and Lynn Montgomery provided coffee, water, and pastries, and drew door prize winners prior to the noon departure.

As usual, the event drew many cruisers with life-saving exhaust systems.

The Polar Bear Run provided an invigorating interlude during the Winter of 2014.



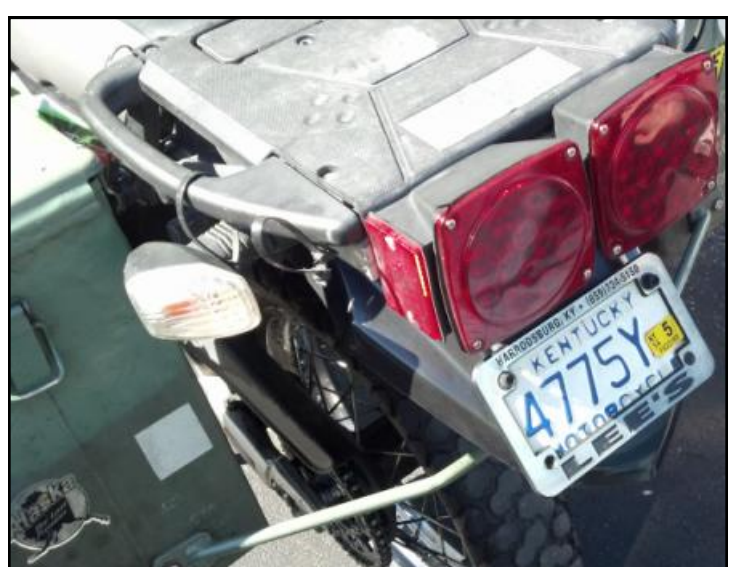
Greeting riders at Polar Bear Run registration were (from left) Don Carney, Gary Warren, and Raymond Montgomery.



KLR 650 to Harley Shovelhead with hand shift



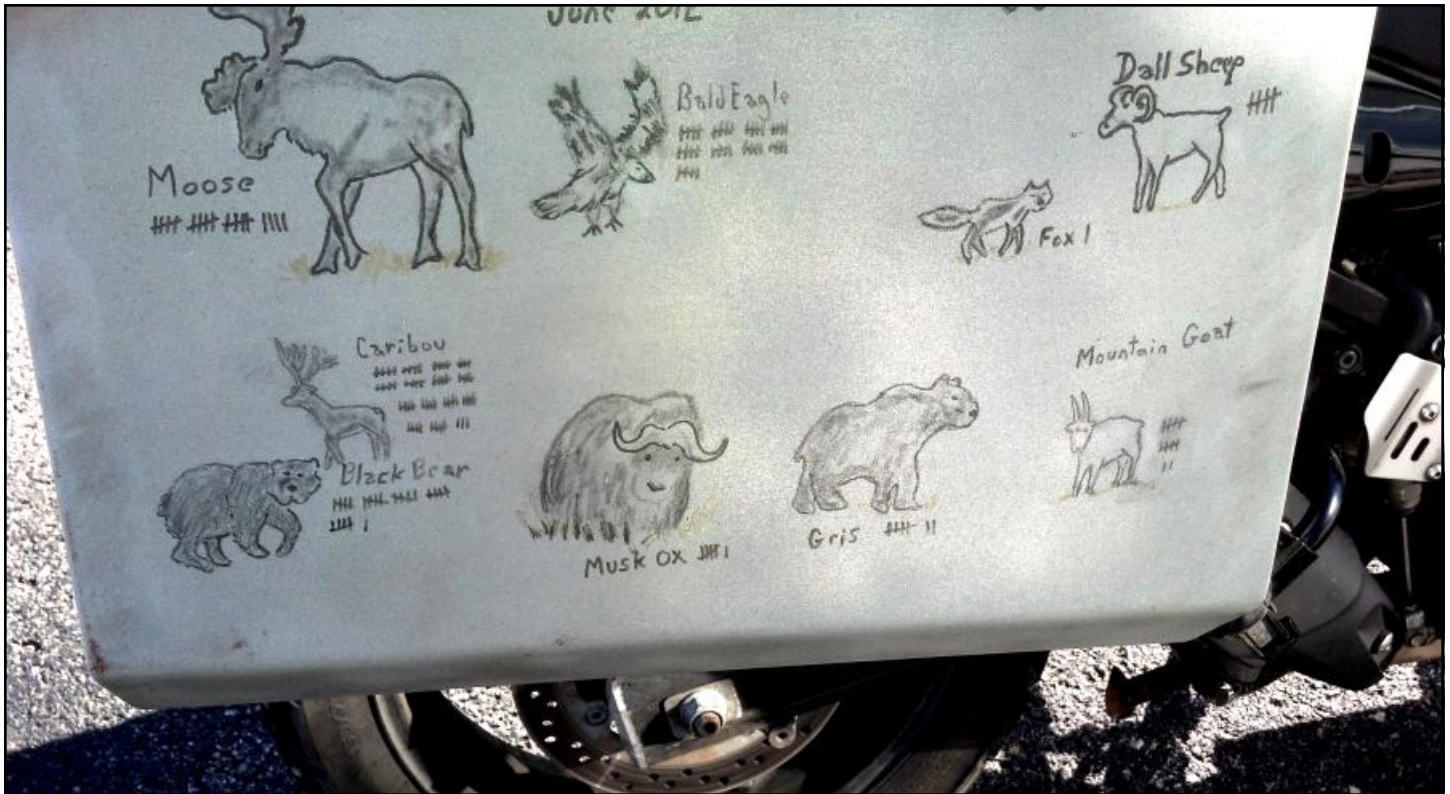
Kickstand Polar Bear Run draws 205 riders



Kickstand Polar Bear Run draws 205 riders



Kickstand Polar Bear Run draws 205 riders

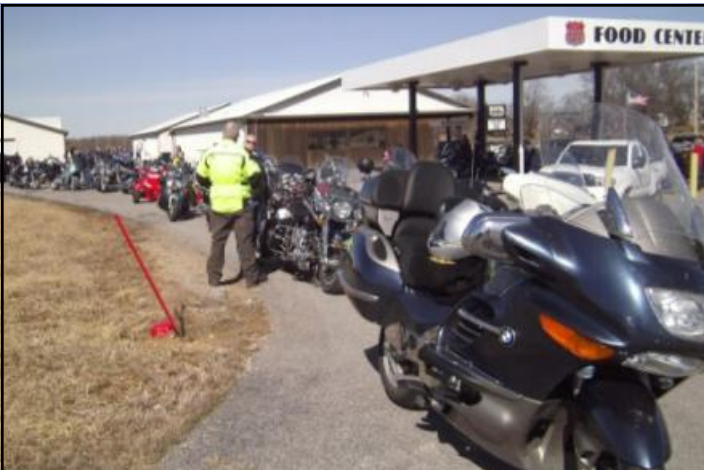


Kickstand Polar Bear Run draws 205 riders



Kickstand Polar Bear Run draws 205 riders

Photos on this page by Tom Weber



The Airhead Encore Tour

Part 3 The Cabot Trail

By John Rice



The “Old Cabot Trail” dirt portion that remains from the original perimeter road on Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

OK, here’s the deal. Get yourself to the Cabot Trail on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Just do it.

If you’re a motorcyclist, who appreciates curves and scenery and food, all in excess, you won’t regret it.

When we last saw our superannuated peregrinators, they were

drying out in a lakeside motel in Baddeck, Nova Scotia.

Dawn broke, with no discernible damage, and we started out from Baddeck, the town that bills itself as the beginning and end point, down at about the 5 o’clock position on the circle.

The storm had cleared, leaving cloudless blue skies over a

cold, electric-vest-appreciated, morning here in mid-August while back home folks were sweltering. A short jog south from our motel and a right turn took us from the lake shore to the interior of the island, heading northwest up into low hills to then cross Hunter’s Mountain and down into Lower Middle River (a geographically correct, if uninspiring name for a waterway).

We’re pretty much alone up here, in these early hours of the morning, with wide sweeping curves around the mountain’s bulges and only the occasional outpost of a store and small restaurant here and there to show that folks live here and hope you’ll stop by.

Along this road is the only motorcycle shop on the Island, so mark its location if you think you might need services!

The Airhead Encore Tour

Part 3 The Cabot Trail

By John Rice



The Trail comes down from the interior hills to the coast at Margaree Harbor. One minute you're in the hills, coming around a curve and then there is the ocean spread out endlessly before you with that unmistakable salt air and the shore birds wheeling in the wide, brilliantly blue sky.

This is the "French side" of the island, where the names of the towns have that Gallic touch with a "du" here and a "le" there to let you know you're not in Kansas anymore, Toto.

Just a short distance up from Margaree is a portion of the "Old Cabot Trail", the unpaved remnant that follows the extreme edge of the shore. This dirt road only goes a short distance, but we had to give it a try, just to say we had. I can picture early last century tourists, making it up to this northern island and pottering around the dusty track in their REO's and Stutz Bearcats with the waves licking only a few feet from their tall balloon tires. For us on this day though, the

old trail was muddy from yesterday's rain and the short stint was all we spoiled modern travelers wanted.

A bit north is the French settlement of Cheticamp, a little larger than the other villages, and where Brenda and I spent a night all those years ago in a boarding house across the road from the harbor. I later learned that the loose translation of the name is "poor campsite" which begs the question of why the early French settlers decided to stay long enough to form a town.

Just up from the "poor campsite" is the beginning of the Cape Breton Highlands National Park, which requires a small entry fee (even smaller for senior citizens like us!). As you can see from the photos, the seaside scenery gets even better here as the road meanders through the notches the ocean has left in the shore and then heads up into the mountains. My younger self in 96 was more interested in challenging the curves (not that the curves noticed) but now Jay

and I find more pleasure in a legal pace with plenty of time for taking in the view. There's not much traffic yet and much of that is pulled off in the overlooks, cameras at the ready. We motor on blissfully past Cap Rouge and begin the climb up over French Mountain into the inner wilds of the Park. These are wonderful curves, with occasional views of the sea popping out from between the peaks. There is a brief traf-

fic jam, as everyone comes to a halt to admire a family of moose wandering down the creek beside the road, stopping for a long drink from the stream as oblivious to the camera-wielding tourists as seasoned stars on the red carpet at a premier.

From here, the downhill run to the cliffs overlooking the water at Pleasant Bay is marvelous with one switchback after another on wide clean



The road entering Cape Breton Highlands National Park, and it gets better from here.

The Airhead Encore Tour

Part 3 The Cabot Trail

By John Rice



Bullwinkle's family wandering along the Cabot Trail.



It's not often that you see this many mid-life crises in one place.

pavement, no doubt laid down by motorcycle enthusiast road-workers.

There is a nice seafood restaurant at Pleasant Bay, with excellent scallops and a large parking lot which is on this day home to a Prowler Rally. Nine of the faux hot rods are arranged along the perimeter, with license plates from far distant places. Nearly all of the drivers are men "of a certain age", some with female companions either their own age or half that, all looking prosperous. It's not often one sees that many mid-life crises in one spot. The rods are interesting, but I'll stick to our two-wheeled conveyance, thank you.

While we are mingling among the Prowlers, a Harley speeds into the lot and parks next to our Airheads. It is Nancy and her canine companion Sergio, our acquaintances from Antigonish a few days ago. Nancy has passed up the

gas stations down by the shore near the park entrance, assuming that there would be fuel available at the next town here at Pleasant Bay. There isn't. Her Harley was feeling a bit thirsty and it would be a lot for her to push up the next mountain, without much help available from the five-pound Sergio.

One of the many good things about an old BMW Paris-Dakar model is the 9 gallon gas tank and mine was recently filled at one of those stations she had passed. A pop bottle was procured and with only a minimal mess, fuel was transferred, crisis averted. She and Sergio went into the restaurant (dogs are far more welcome in such places here, and in many other countries, than in the US) and we proceeded on.

From Pleasant Bay, the Trail ascends back up into the heights, following a pass across the island between the North Mountains and the South

Mountains. It's not exactly Alpine in altitude, but the feeling is there with the peaks on both sides as the road twists between. There are snow shelters up here and crossing signs for snowmobiles and skiers, letting us know that this area is perfect for more uses than just motorcycles.

After Cape North and South Harbor (they are really big on cardinal direction naming up here), the Trail heads south again, toward the Atlantic coast. We reached the shore at Neil's Harbor and decided to take a side road that promised to run us back up into the mountains. It did, giving us a completely open but narrow road to White Point, a small fishing village isolated from the tourist trade and then spectacular views of Aspy Bay as we followed it back down to South Harbor. Jay and I almost never backtrack ourselves, but since we had already done so, we opted to take the advice given

us by our Backroads magazine folk back in Calais. They had told us about Meat Cove, the "end of the road" at the top of the island and that intersection was now just a short distance behind us.

This road is off the Trail and clearly not one taken by a lot of tourists. It meanders up along the base of North Mountain, along the Atlantic coast until it turns back inland at Sugarloaf. From there it makes its way to the fishing village of Capstick, where the pavement ends. A dirt road carries the rest of the trip about 10 or 15 miles along the Bay of St. Lawrence to the campground at Meat Cove, where even that primitive track ends. There's a small restaurant at the camp and picnic tables where one can sit and contemplate the naming of this place, not for its beauty but for the sustenance it offered in a landscape where that quality was paramount. Try to imagine what life must have been like

The Airhead Encore Tour

Part 3 The Cabot Trail

By John Rice



The pavement ends at Capstick.



up here a hundred years ago, in a Cape Breton winter, when the fish in this bay and whatever unfortunate mammals may happen along were the only food one would have until spring. Meat Cove isn't the end of the world, but you can see it from here.

Back on the Trail, with the afternoon slipping away, we motored south along the Atlantic with the road doing its best to hang on to the hills overlooking the water. This is the more Scottish side of the island and a bit thicker with tourist spots interspersed among the working fishing villages. The sun seems brighter here and the wind is not so prevalent, because, I suppose, we're on the leeward side of the island with the mountains now serving as protection. This side follows the coast more closely and the curves are, if that's possible, even better. There is one spot, near South Bay, where the road suddenly emerges from tree cover and the sea jumps into view as if the pavement had ended. It does get your attention. There are craft shops and little village restaurants along the way, but after stopping at a few (including a marvelous leatherworker) we realize that the sun is sinking low behind the western peaks and now we're hustling a bit, trying to get back to Baddeck before dark.

All too soon, the Trail comes into the highway, an ordinary road in the real world, not the alternate universe in which motorcycles hold priority, and we arrive back in the town where we started.

The Airhead Encore Tour

Part 3 The Cabot Trail

By John Rice

A late dinner is found at the “Bell Buoy” restaurant, where no one bats an eye at two guys in motorcycle gear. As we leave in the pitch black night, for the five mile jaunt back to our motel, my headlight gives up the ghost and I follow Jay’s beam to the parking lot.

The Trail is 137 miles around the top of Cape Breton Island and taking the detours we did added about another 50 or so. It’s a long day, but done in the summer one can take it all in. Ifno, when...I go back, I’ll probably go at it from the counterclockwise direction this time, just for variety, and may stay another day just to explore a bit more of the Park and to try the eastern shore of the Bras D’Or Lake.

In 1996, Brenda and I circumnavigated Nova Scotia in about a week, checking out as many places as we could, including the wonderful village of Peggy’s Cove, the city of Halifax and got ourselves stranded by a hurricane for two days in Yarmouth. We rode in the tail of that storm to Digby (the only

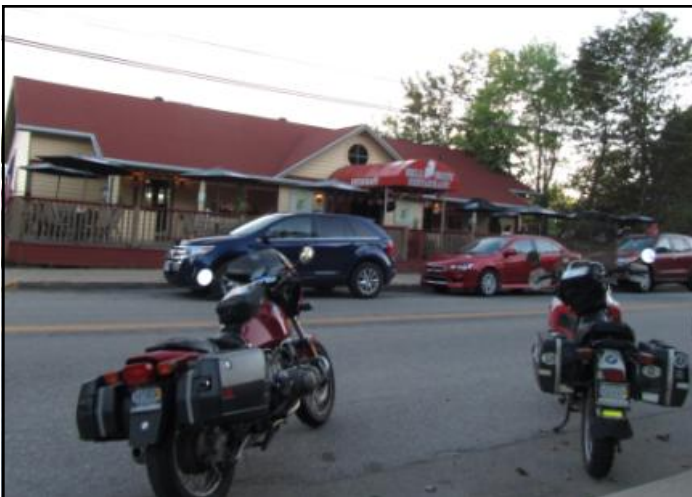
part of the trip I would not want to repeat) and had the best, bar none, scallops in the world while awaiting the ferry ride back over to the mainland.

One could easily spend an entire motorcycling summer in Nova Scotia and still want more.

I wouldn’t suggest being there on your bike when winter comes.



It’s a hard life on the trail, but someone’s got to do it.



Bell Buoy Restaurant

For Sale 1988 R100RT

56,562
original miles

Serviced regularly the last two years by local BMW Club (Bluegrass Beemers) mechanic.

- Driving lights
- Parabellum wind-shield
- side panniers
- top case
- driving lights
- highway pegs
- recent fluids change
- recent valve adjustment
- accessory plug
- 80% tires
- new mirrors
- Corbin seat
- original seat
- BMW tank cover
- pull handle for kickstand
- dual plugged
- extra parts such as larger jets, ignition module, shop manual

Title is clear, always stored in a garage. I've had the bike for two years, took it to Colorado and back last summer.

The bike was previously owned by the same older gentle-

man for approx 20 years before I bought it.

This bike will run all day long on the highway at 85 MPH.

This is a great bike but I am buying a new one, its time to let someone else enjoy a timeless classic.

\$3,000

Todd Fuller
859-420-0922



Loaded for Colorado trip last summer

For Sale 2003 R1100S Boxer Cup Replica



21,900 miles

- BMW system cases
- Suburban handlebar risers
- tank bag
- fresh Metzlers

I purchased this lease bike in 2007 from Louisville BMW with only 3,500 miles registered.

This bike is always maintained according to book, garaged kept, in excellent condition and ready to ride.

\$7,900

Lee Thompson

leetlex92@gmail.com

859-475-7029



For Sale 1995 R100 Mystic



58,000 miles

- Motorrad Elektrik 450 watt alternator
- Nippondenso starter
- Staintune exhaust
- Works shock
- high compression pistons

\$4,000/OBO

Stuart Smythe
270-769-9534
smythe0102@gmail.com



Awards Banquet March 29th Chop House

**2640 Richmond Rd.
Lexington**

**Food
Drink
Awards
Recognitions
Secret Club Stuff**

**5:30 p.m. Social Hour
6:30 p.m. Dinner**



The KICKSTAND

Your Motorcycle Parts & Accessories Destination

500 East Main Street - Burgin, Kentucky 40310

Phone: 859.748.KICK (5425)

www.TheKickstandLLC.com

NEW

Stop in to check-out the
world's smallest jump starter
and back-up power supply!

ANTIGRAVITY BATTERIES

MICRO-START PERSONAL POWER SUPPLY

- Weighing less than one pound, it's small enough to fit in your pocket, yet powerful enough to start motorcycles, even V8 trucks.
- The unit will power or charge laptops, phones, tablets, GPSs, cameras and more.
- It has three on-board power ports – 19V, 12V and 5V.
- A hi-power LED flashlight, with two flash patterns, is built-in.
- It has a battery capacity indicator and an automatic power-off, when not in use.
- The Micro-Start comes with everything you need in a convenient carrying case.
- ~~Retail \$159.99~~

\$134.99 Bluegrass Beemer Price

