August 2016 Cooking Through The Curve

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



No Card for this Anniversary

By Jeff Crabb

July 31st marks the fifth anniversary of my most serious motorcycle crash. One day I hope to tell the story, even though I don't know the climax of the event due to being more available to me. Usuknocked out during. (So far, I still think that is a plus.) But I think I can piece it together.

riding a motorcycle for as long as I have known motorcycles have existed.

with other riders being taken out by inattentive drivers, drivers swerving into the opposite lane for no apparent reason and all of the distractions that are in place for those that drive.

Don't get me wrong, I still enjoy riding and have had some great adventures over the years and hope to have more. I count myself lucky that, to a certain point, I'm

still able to enjoy riding as much as I ever have.

I was lucky the last time, I just don't know if my luck is running out or if there is ally, you don't know until you run out.

This may be one of the reasons I took over editing the I have known the dangers of Apex. I get to read the stories and pass them along to my fellow enthusiasts. If, someday, I give up riding, I Today I find it harder to ride hope to still be living the life through the stories of others.

In this edition, John Rice finishes his latest story of riding the Blue Ridge Parkway. (I'm starting to think he is establishing multiple state citizenship with as much time as he spends on this wonderful road.) Also, Tim Adkins gives us a story about riding to New England with his wife

The club members have also

picked up some new rides this season.

Please enjoy the stories and the pictures and please keep sending in your stories and pictures.

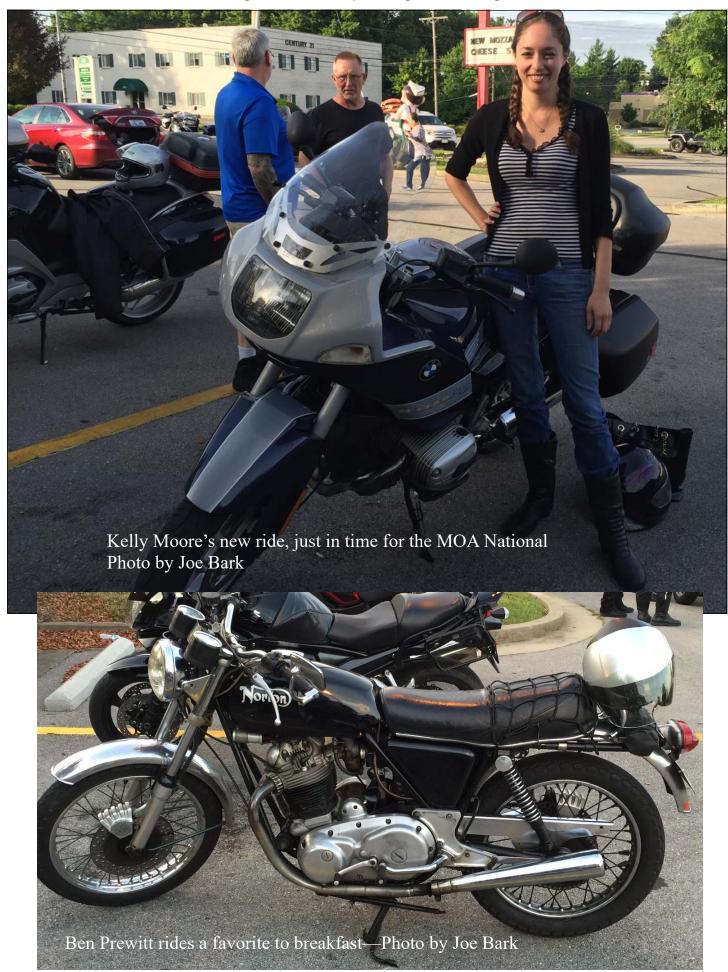
Please send all of your contributions to apex@bluegrassbeemers.org.

Thanks

Apex is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc. Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #49 Jeff Crabb, Editor jdcrabb@hotmail.com Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month. Back issues of Apex can be accessed on our website Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd. in Lexington, Kentucky on any Saturday, 7-9:00 a.m.









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Jeff Odean's new ride Photos by Joe Bark

The Mountains are calling and we Must Go...

Part II

Article & Photos by John Rice

(We last saw our gray-haired, rain-dampened protagonists scarfing down pie in Staunton, Virginia....)

Rain poured down on us as we left Mrs. Rowe's restaurant, headed back to the Parkway. The Skyline Drive ends here at Staunton and the Blue Ridge begins with little notice of the transition but for an unmanned ranger kiosk. By the time we had reached the magic road, the rain had stopped and up on the ridges, the pavement was dry. It really is another world up here, made for motorcycles.

At Lexington, VA we called a halt for the day. This Lexington,

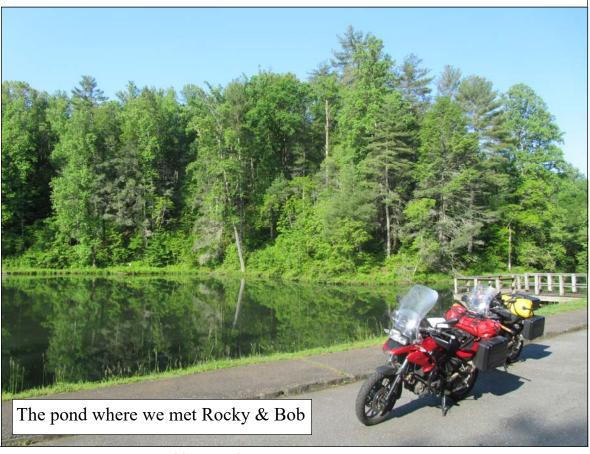
like its Kentucky cousin, is an old city, one with colleges dominating the downtown and history everywhere one can look. The colleges are, as is their destiny, busily building new spaces to occupy while the old historic places harrumph with irritation and squeeze in their shoulders a bit to make room for the upstarts. The downtown hotels weren't really the

best thing for a bike trip, leading us out into the 'burbs for something with an outside entrance and a restaurant next door.

We awoke the next morning to dense, can't-see-across-the-parking-lot, fog, but confident that it wouldn't have ascended to the heights of the Parkway, we motored slowly through the softened outlines of Lexington back to the access. Sure enough, as we climbed up the curves we broke through the mist into clear and sunny weather. On this Tuesday morning there was no other traffic on the Parkway and we sailed along enjoying the cool air in solitude.

The trees and roadside foliage are fully leafed out now. Two weeks ago, when Brenda and I were here in the sidecar rig, these were in their adolescence, showy and colorful, blooms proclaiming to the world that they were young, fertile and ready for life. Now they are in young adulthood, staking out their place as maturing citizens, and holding fast to their place in the scheme of things. They are solid green now, no need for the show. By fall they will be in the final stages, wanting to make a last splash in the world before going into that long winter's rest.

Through these green canyons we cruised seamless, predictable



curves, no need for excessive speed to enjoy these, more pleasure drip than adrenalin challenge. The 800cc twin is in its happy place up here, high altitude cool air, 3,500 to 4,500 rpm in a single gear and, with earplugs in, it seems silent at this pace, electric, like flowing liquid from picking up nesting material in its function, completely effortless.

We stopped at a pond beside the Parkway, where some roadside trees might need inspection, and met Bob and Rocky, two guys about our age on their way to Florida. Rocky was the silent type, but Bob told us his life story in about ten minutes of almost auctioneer-pace talking. Seems he raced for a while in his not so distant past, both flat track and road courses, retired from something that obviously paid well and now is "homeless", his term for living in a giant RV, based in Florida and from there roaming the country. Both of these bikes, an R1200RT and a kitted-out-for-adventure Kawasaki KLR are Bob's, being ferried from some northern base to the Florida one. They stopped at this pond today because last year they had spread the ashes of a motorcycling friend here, per his last wishes, and were visiting his essence in the best way they could, on a bike trip. I agree.

On past Parkway excursions I had passed the lovely Peaks of Otter Lodge, always thinking I'd stop there later. At this age, I realize that "later" is here now, so we pulled in to see what the Lodge had to offer, hoping that it as they should, and on this day included pastry. It did. The res-

taurant of the mountain-style lodge looks out over a lake and we had it all to ourselves as we sampled one of their specialties, apple dumplings. There's a small island in the lake and as we stuffed ourselves, we watched birds making endless round trips on the shoreline to selected trees on the protected bit of land out in the water. They care not that we are here, watching them, living our lives. They have business to tend to and, soon, families to raise, and will continue with that long after the human infestation has ended.

Since we snacked earlier, we opted for a late lunch at Mabry Mill, a working grist mill south of Roanoke along the parkway. In past years, Brenda and I used to stop here to cart home stoneground grits when such things were harder to come by locally. Now there are endless variations of wholesome foods available in the stores at home and, if all else fails, on line. Still, Mabry is a good place to visit and in addition to the Mill, they have an old style roadside restaurant. I selected "Ed's Special" when I found that it was named for the original owner of the restaurant. The Special turned out to be several heavy cornmeal pancakes layered with pulled pork barbecue and enough of it to feed me and a couple of hungry friends. I to Tech Support and there were don't know the entire history of Ed, but I assume it includes a cast-iron stomach.

Sometimes things just work out that meant that we ended up at

Blowing Rock, one of my favorite places, at a good time to stop for the night. The Ridgeway Inn, where we had stayed a few years ago when we brought the 250's down for some dual sport exploring, had a room available and the lady at the desk said that, though it had just ended, she would extend the wine-andcheese hour for us in the little room adjoining the office.

Later we wandered down the street, window-shopping and stopping in one place for Jay to buy a hat, finally settling on the Six Pence Pub for supper. The draft beer selection was adequate if not inspired, and the pub-grub menu just what we needed.

Making our way back to the room, we happened upon a couple in the parking lot of the allpurpose store on Main Street. She was on a Harley Trike and he was standing, forlornly, next to an unresponsive 2014 Indian motorcycle. It was a beautiful machine, lovely soft colors in the gleaming deep red and cream paint, rococo lines recalling the iconic Indians of old...but utterly silent because of something the ancient ones did not have: an electronic key that stubbornly refused to communicate with the little antenna ring on the motorcycle it was intended to start. Technology is wonderful until it isn't. They had made their calls rooms available for the night in town so there was little to be done for them except moral support. For a shade tree mechanic like myself, bailing wire, duct tape and a chewing gum wrapper making useful noises.

The Parkway at early daylight is perfect. Cool, green, misty here and there, utterly and completely ours...at least as far as humans go. Critters are stirring, making their silent way around the trees and bushes, crossing the lina accent in which he proroad quickly to avoid us. We arrive at Switzerland too early for the Little Switzerland Cafe to his second family, new children be open so must "settle" for the restaurant at the Switzerland Inn, another of my very favorite places along this road. The rising sun fills the huge windows and floods the room with light as the valley below comes into sharp focus and we tuck into an overly large but well-made breakfast. The place is relatively full, as the tourist season is be-

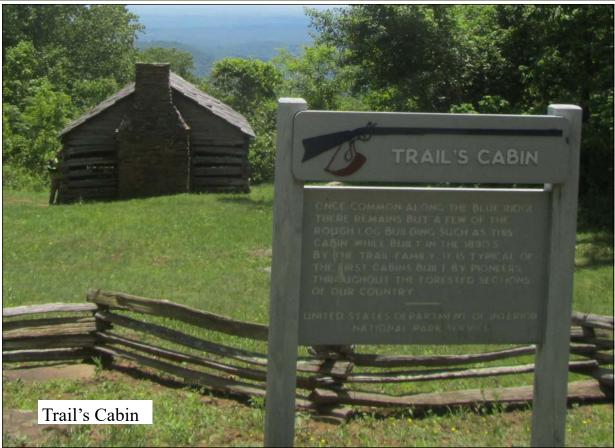
weren't going to get this machine ginning. Mostly older folks like us at the moment, but there will be families here when the schools let out. In the parking lot we meet Tenere Man from Gastonia, a half day's ride away. He is a tall fellow, mid-40's, with a strong mid-North Caroclaims to us that he "just loves bikes, man!" He is beginning mixing with older offspring from his starter marriage, so has a difficult time getting away for serious motorcycle travel. Once a Harley rider, he has found his niche on dual sports, much to the seen snow in the air up here in chagrin of his riding buddies back home, and the Yamaha Super Tenere is, in his view, the perfect such machine. With the Blue Ridge just a short distance

from his back yard, who can argue with that?

Another mandatory stop on this part of the Parkway is Mt. Mitchell, the highest point in the eastern US. Having just filled up on breakfast, we reluctantly pass by the cafe near the top where one can have pie with a view, and make our way to the "almost summit". There is a parking area and small visitors center about a hundred yards or so from the actual high point, but one must walk that last bit to truly be on top. It is noticeably colder up here at over 6,000 feet (I have July) and the bus load of middle -school age children arriving for a field trip are dressed for the hot summer down in the flatlands from which they came. No







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problem, though, since at that age they have metabolisms like a trails on the mountain, all funblast furnace and cold is an abstract concept. As anyone familiar with such students could predict, their first stop is the snack bar and not the summit. As we are getting back on our bikes, Tenere Man appears, also having succumbed to the lure of this being high the natural way. As we leave, he follows us down the mountain and on south, but when see a group of bicyclists with we pull over to shed layers as the heat accumulates in the valleys, he cruises on past, headed home to work and families.

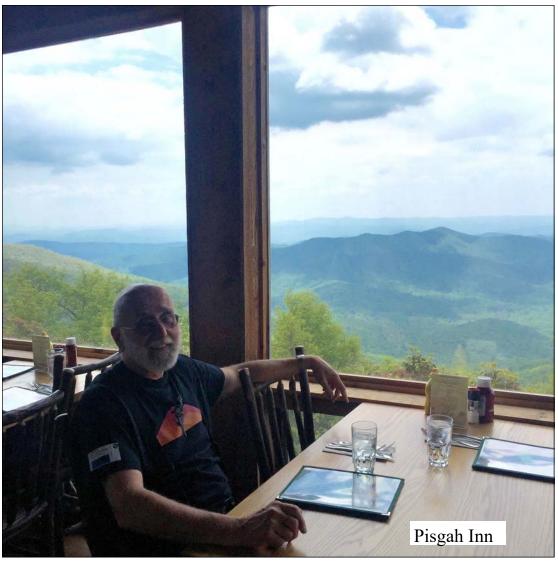
We are under clear skies now, with only the occasional wispy

cloud to provide perspective in the ganzfeld of blue. There is no traffic to speak of until we near Asheville, when cars seem to appear out of thin air, as if by Star Trek style transporter. Then, just as quickly as they appeared, they are gone by the time we ascend up Mt. Pisgah where another required eating stop must be made. The Pisgah Inn restaurant hangs on the side of the ridge overlooking the Pisgah National Forest and provides a fine lunch, with, of course, pie. It is crowded today, lots of other tourists, bicyclists and hikers

taking advantage of the many neling in here for the food and the ambiance of the setting. In the parking lot, we see a group of folks gathered around a sidecar outfit, an older Suzuki 550 two-stroke with what appears to be a homemade car and rigging. A girl on a bicycle exclaims "I want one for my dog!" Don't we all. Later on the Parkway we do one woman towing a trailer containing a rather confused looking spaniel. I think the pooch might have preferred the sidecar.

From Pisgah, it is a marvelous ride down to Cherokee, more

miles of perfectly radiused arcs, magnificent views and hardly another vehicle to spoil our fun. We can feel the heat rising as we descend and all too soon, as it always seems, we are back in the "real world" off the Parkway and immersed in traffic, stop lights, route signs and businesses. We avoided the tourist magnets of Cherokee and went over the mountain on the old route to Waynesville NC, where the Oak Park Inn awaits. They had a vacant room and the Sweet Onion restaurant downtown had a table for dinner and all was right with the world again. Once upon a time, when I was young and in-



satiably curious about where the next road might lead, the idea of returning frequently to the same place would have been unthinkable. I'm still curious, still interested in following that side road just to see where it goes, but I'm old enough to know that there are pleasures in familiar places too. A town like Waynesville is a welcome stop when you know there's a motorcycle-friendly old style motel within walking distance of a real downtown with everything one needs for a pleasant evening.

And not just the evening. In the morning, we walked down to the City Bakery for breakfast. It is a melding of the old-school downtown bakery that every small town used to have with the vibe of a big city neighborhood place. Inside, the exposed brick walls and polished old wood fittings impart a peacefulness that enhances the marvelous pastries in the long cases up front. And the coffee is good...what else do you need?

Leaving a tasty breakfast, we hankered for a bit of tasty road, so returned to the Parkway, only a few miles out of Waynesville, and headed south again to go through Cherokee and on to Bryson City. Rt. 28 South out of Bryson is one of the better motorcycle roads in the non-Parkway genre, very twisted but not so tedious as the Dragon can be in spots. Very little traffic on this morning as we zipped along at a brisk but not perilous pace until we reached Franklin where

we had intended to take a scenic route shown as a thin wiggly line made-on-the-premises pie (it's on our map. Wayah Road wasn't not "home-made" unless someto be found, however, in any of the places the map suggested it might be. Jay's GPS threw up its rain come down. Like most electronic hands and said "Beats me!" We went round and round in Franklin before finally giving up and doing what we should have done in the first place: ask directions. The Visitors Center was empty when we walked in and the lady with the surprisingly New Jersey accent seemed surprised to see any actual visitors there. When we asked her about Wayah Road, we could see that we had made her day. She laughed at our confusion and gave us detailed directions while telling us why it wasn't where more modern granola-and-yogurt the map said it was. I'm not sure I recall exactly, but it seemed to involve local politics.

When we found it, miles out of town instead of in the center, it was in fact a great little twisty back road...for about the first two miles. Then we were stopped several minutes for construction vehicles and the rest of our time on this scenic route was spent looking at fresh oily pavement covered in gravel, slowly following cars and trucks that had stacked up behind the frequent roadblocks. We'll have to return to this one in a year or so when the gravel has been kicked off and the construction is over.

Rain caught us again as we got near Robbinsville, so we took refuge in Lynn's Cafe across from the Courthouse on the road that leads to the Cherahola Skyway. Lynn's offers great food, one lives in the restaurant) and a dry place to sit and watch the summer storms, it didn't last long and by the time we got up on the Skyway, the majority of the road surface was dry, giving us a fine run through the sweeper curves. At the Tellico Plains end of the Skyway is a small museum with a large motorcycle clothing store attached, but this time neither of us could find anything we just had to have.

Leaving Tellico Plains, one must either go through the mess that is Knoxville traffic or find a long way around. We chose the western route this time, going up 68 with the general idea of staying the night in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the little town that atomic energy built. During its initial heyday in the glow-in-thedark business, the town didn't even officially exist, not shown on maps, to keep its secret work, well, secret. Now it's quite in the open, proud of its heritage and a good place to stop for the night on the long way around Knoxville. On another trip we had used this town as a base from which to ride the "Devils Triangle" only a few miles away, but now we were on the way home, it was getting late and such things would have to wait for the next time.

A pleasant breakfast at Burchfield's, in the hotel across the street, and then off to Rt. 61 cutting a diagonal across the



state north of Knoxville. Some parts of this road are great motorcycle curves, but a lot of it goes across a valley floor, between foothills with pretty scenery, impressive farms but few twisty bits. It's mostly a slog from Tazewell, through the Cumberland Gap and on up to Pineville where we can take Rt. 66 (not the two-guys-in-a-Corvette one, but the one that goes through the Redbird Forest) and enjoy some elevation changes with the curves that sort of thing brings. There are great dual-sport trails in the Redbird, but again, that was for another time (and different bikes) so we pressed on. Rt. 421 brought us to McKee, where we were pleased to find that Opal's Restaurant had returned to opera-

tion. Opal's had long been a reli- that used to wind up through the able pie stop for eastern Kentucky rides, but in recent years Opal had turned it over to a Mexican Restaurant that probably had good south of the border food, but no pie. Now, Opal's daughter informed us, she had returned to the business and was, even as we spoke, taking pies from the oven back in the kitchen. Daughter served them to us shortly, warm and a bit runny on the plate, butterscotch and coconut cream. Motorcycles on curvy roads through the forest, fresh pie not long from the oven, if there is a Nirvana, it should be like this.

Route 421 from McKee back to Richmond has some good bits, until it reaches the part "improved" to remove the curves wanted to experience the peace

hollows in days of old. We rescued our first terrapin of the year, taking the little guy from his precarious spot in the middle of the road over to the field on the side to which he was pointing. His appearance was heartening, since in the last few years there have been none in evidence, for reasons not immediately apparent. "Canary in the coal mine" has more of a ring to it than "turtle on the highway", but I do wonder if there is something they are trying to tell us by their absence. Hard to tell, since Terrapins really aren't great communicators.

This was a motorcycle trip for its own sake, with no overall redeeming social value. We just



and beauty of the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway, as can best be properly appreciated, in our opinion, from the seat of moving motorcycles. As always, such trips involve times of discomfort, riding in the rain, being hot, being cold, being a bit hungry and being a bit (or more) overfed. There are animals, both two and four-legged, that create dangers not within our control. We start out in the morning not

knowing for certain where we will be sleeping tonight, but confident that something suitable will appear, and if it doesn't, we'll make do with whatever does. The uncertainty, the discomfort and even the dangers are all necessary to enhance the pure pleasure of the thing, the feeling that can come only from banking into a sweeping curve that nature made and humans paved for our enjoyment on such a beautiful

road in wonderful mountains with valleys all around going on forever in the cool morning air and finding a roadside restaurant run by locals who make the best pie ever. It isn't for everyone, but I'm eternally grateful that it found me

New England Adventure

by Tim Adkins

We were planning on going west to Colorado and riding up Pikes Peak but the extreme temps all across the West convinced us to go north to New England instead. We left home Friday morning with dark skies and angry clouds as we made our we hit the super slab for a long way east into WV. Stopping for breakfast at Cracker

Barrel near Charleston a few drops hit our face shields as we were parking. When we started to leave after eating, the rain started coming down steady. We had rain off and on most of the way North until Clarksburg and Rt.50. The rest of the day was perfect sunny weather with nice 70's temps. We stopped in Cumberland, MD for the night; I would like to spend a few days there. Lots to see and do with the old C&O canal and all the nice shops and places to eat. We had a good meal

at the Crappy Pig, a BBQ / Seafood place. We took a walk to the downtown area for ice cream and checked out a car show and live band.

The next morning was clear and cool, 67 degrees felt great as day of 4 lanes on our way to

Connecticut. Crazy traffic was our constant companion as we made our way thru Penn., NJ and NY. I thought CT would offer some relief but we later found out everyone was headed to Cape Cod etc for the weekend. We finally reached our friends home in Salem CT. They have a



Club E-mail Group Have you joined? To subscribe send an e-mail to Bgbeemers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com beautiful home and awesome family and it was so good to see them again.

the White Cedar Inn. Maybe the best B&B we have ever stayed in. The next morning we headed awoke to steady rain. After only

it. Burlington VT was our stop for the night. The next day we



We hated to say goodbye but we had a lot of miles ahead of us. We left CT and landed in York Maine. We got lucky and found a great deal on a B&B.

The York Harbor Inn, right on the rocky coast with a view of the ocean. The next day we rode thru some beautiful towns on the coast where everything was picture perfect. We checked out the Nubble lighthouse and had some great seafood for lunch at Fox's right by the sea. We stayed on the coast most of the way to Freeport where we had to visit the LL Bean store. We got lucky and found another great B&B in Freeport. If you ever need a place to stay in Freeport, check out

for Mt. Washington, NH. I had always wanted to ride the COG Railway to the top of Mt. Washington. It was fun and a great experience and we are glad we did

a few miles in the rain we crossed Lake Champlain by ferry in the bright sun.

Our plan was to ride Rt.3 all the way across NY to Watertown.



We stopped at Gus' Red Hot's for a great hot dog in Plattsburgh NY. Going thru a small town intersection, a car pulled out right in front of us. How we missed hitting him I don't know but we both believe the Lord was with us and kept us safe. That evening Riding the Maid of the Mist etc. after we checked into our motel in Watertown and enjoying a great meal at the Fairground Inn, we went to Wal-mart and bought two high vis vest.

The next day we headed for Buffalo and the Anchor Bar. I had always wanted to visit the home of Buffalo wings. I was a

little surprised that the place was morning walking around the Careally made for tourist. Oh well, we still enjoyed the wings and got a tee shirt :-)

We stayed the night at Niagara Falls and did all the tourist stuff. Checking off items on our bucket list. Crossing into Canada the next day was a bit of a hassle. The agent at the border asked a lot of questions and even a flash bulletin reporting two had Kim get off the bike to tell her the license number (I couldn't remember). We spent all

nadian side of the falls. Everyone said it was the best view and they were right. We rode a few back roads in Canada and wound up crossing the border at Buffalo. The young man there was only a little less official, asking a lot of questions also. He got out of his booth and checked our license tag himself. Did they have ISIS bombers with high-vis vest riding a BMW R1200? Hum, makes you wonder what the

> heck they are looking for.

The weather was getting warmer and the forecast was calling for more rain so we decided to head for home. We hit the super slab again, stopping for lunch and a rest in Erie PA, got stuck in some really slow traffic around Cleveland OH, making it to Mansfield OH for the night. The next day we stopped at



Iron Pony Motorcycle Super Store in Columbus OH. They have taken an old Wal-Mart and turned it into a giant motorcycle

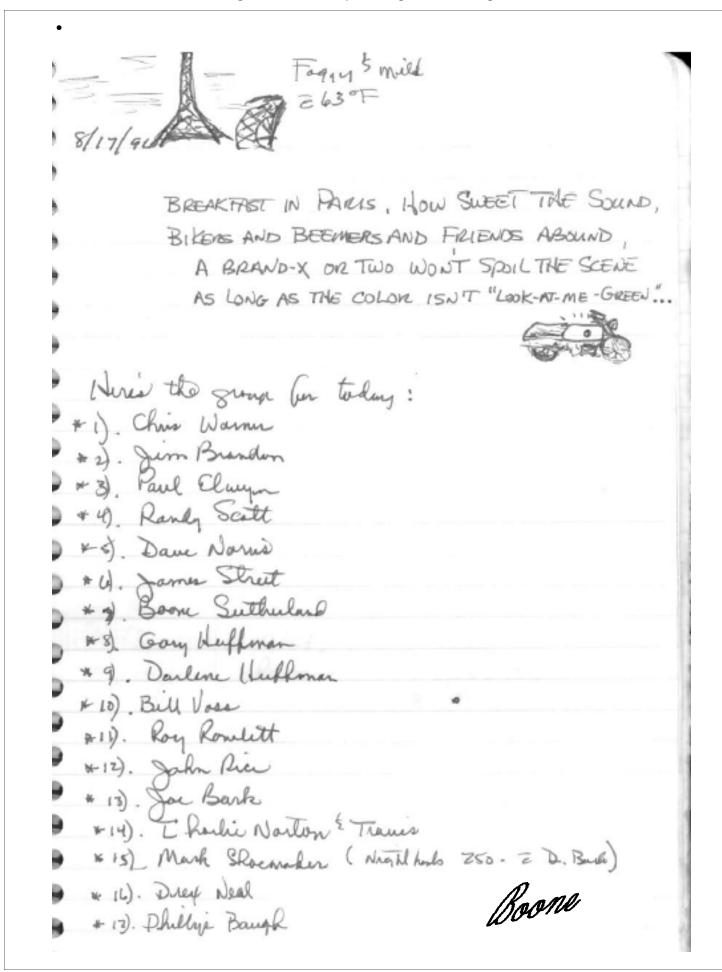
store. They sell a bunch of different brands of bikes and just about every kind of gear you can think of. We stopped in Ports-

mouth at the Ribber for supper, then crossed into KY and the curvy ride home. 9 days, 12 states & Canada, 2500 miles.



Beemers in the Bluegrass Mini Rally

September 9th—11th



Books available on loan

The following books are available on loan. Email me when you want to borrow one, and I will bring it to breakfast (or whatever other arrangements need to be made...I can deliver within reason) and I'll put your name beside it on my list.

I don't mind if people keep them a while (it takes me forever to read a book now....I keep falling asleep and then have to reread the last 10 pages or so) but I don't want to give them away for good. At least not yet.

John Rice Riceky@aol.com



Bahnstormer By LJK Setwright
Streetwise By Malcolm Newell
The Bart Markel Story By Joe Scalzo
Mann of his Time By Ed Youngblood
Yesterday's Motorcycles By Karolevitz
The Scottish By Tommy Sandham
This Old Harley By Michael Dregni

Racer: the story of Gary Nixon By Joe Scalzo

All But My Life: Bio of Stirling Moss By Ken Purdy (OK,

not a motorcycle book, but who doesn't like and respect

Stirling Moss?)

Investment Biker By Jim Rogers
Obsessions Die Hard By Ed Culbertson
BMW Twins & Singles By Roy Bacon
Bitten by the Bullet By Steve Krzystyniak & Karen Goa
Cafe Racers of the 1960's By Mick Walker
More Proficient Motorcyling By David Hough

Tales of Triumph Motorcycles & the Meriden Factory:
By Hancox

Sport Riding Techniques By Nick lenatasch **Total Control** By Lee Parks



Smooth Riding By Reg Pridmore.

A Twist of The Wrist (Vol 1 & 2) By Keith Code

Triumph Tiger 100 and Daytona By J. R. Nelson

This Old Harley (anthology) By Dregni

Side Glances By Peter Egan

Mondo Enduro By Austin Vince

Big Sid's Vincati By Matthew Bieberman

101 Road Tales By Clement Salvadori

Riding with Rilke By Ted Bishop

Legendary Motorcycles By Luigi Corbetta

Red Tape and White Knuckles By Lois Pryce

A Man Called Mike By Hilton (bio of Mike Hailwood)

The Perfect Vehicle By Melissa Pierson

One Man Caravan By Robert Fulton (first known circum-

navigation of the world by motorcycle)

Monkey Butt By Rick Sieman

Ariel: The postwar models By Roy Bacon

Short Way Up By Steve Wilson

Endless Horizon By Dan Walsh

Leanings (1 & 2) By Peter Egan

Into the Heart of Africa By Jerry Smith

The Last Hurrah By Des Molloy

(Autographed copy, with DVD of the trip)

Whatever Happened to the British Motorcycle Industry

By Bert Hopwood

Down the Road By Steve Wilson

Motorcycling Excellence

By Motorcycle Safety Foundation

Leanings 3 By Peter Egan

Ghost Rider By Neal Peart