

April 2018

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

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



It's almost here

By Jeff Crabb

Riding season! Having spent the entirety of my life living in central Kentucky, I know winter isn't gone until it says its gone. The calendar doesn't matter. But, we are almost there.

Last Saturday night our club had it's annual dinner. Always good food at The Chop House and a great bunch of people to have shared the evening with. The dinner served as the beginning of new terms for our club president, Kelly

Moore and vice-president, John Rice. Good luck to you both!

This month we have a flash back article that happen almost twenty-five years ago and another article that goes back to the ice age that happen in Kentucky back in the late 70's.

Please enjoy and remember, send all of your contributions to apex@bluegrassbeemers.org.



1984 R80ST For Sale

Just over 35k miles

The tank has a dent on the right side
Bike was restored in 2011, but has only been ridden a few hundred miles since.

More pictures and information are posted on our website under bikes for sale.

Asking \$5200 or best reasonable offer
Contact Jeff at 859-252-5497 or at the email listed below

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

Jeff Crabb, Editor jdcraab@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.

**BMW Club
Bluegrass Beemers**



Pacific Coast Weekend

By John Rice

Since my recent “inconveniences” have prevented any current motorcycle travel, I thought I might recycle a story from the past. This story was written in 1993. In the years since, I have been up and down Highway One and its tributaries and crossed the Golden Gate Bridge many times, but the initial thrill of being there still stands out.

One of the many places on my life list of bike-trips-to-make was always the coast highway in California, those winding cliff roads that we see in all the movies and read about in the magazine stories (though somehow the movie heroes always have the road to themselves!). In 1993 the opportunity arrived to attend a legal education seminar in San Francisco and my mental wheels immediately began churning out a plan for my wife and I to get bike wheels on the fabled Highway One. I made arrangements through California Cycle Rental in Moss Beach, just south of the Bay area, for a BMW K75, packed up our leathers and helmets and off we went to the Left Coast. Our taxi driver from the airport pointed out the aftermath of a recent earthquake, dodged increasingly insane traffic then deposited us at the Westin St. Francis, an elegant old hotel in the heart of the downtown bay district, just a short distance from Fisherman's Wharf. We got our room, hung up our leathers (that should confuse the maid in the morning!) and headed out to see what we could of the City before dark. We took the Powell-Hyde cable car down to the Wharf, wandered through the markets and ended up at a restaurant on the

Bay, with a view of Alcatraz and a resident herd of sea lions barking and harrumphing on the piers. They were great hulking blobs of rippling blubber and after dinner I felt I could have joined them unnoticed.

My seminar lasted two seemingly interminable days (all about insurance fraud--defending against it, that is, not committing it) and by the end of the second day I was in Bike Trip mode long before the class was over. We made an appointment to be picked up by the rental company's driver and then took one last wild cable car ride around the city. There is, of course, nothing like motorcycling, but careening around corners *standing on the front of a cable car, holding on to thin metal pole and leaning out over the street as it tops a hill* over the Bay will serve as a short-term substitute. We passed Lombard Street, the curviest single residential piece of pavement (brick, actually) I've ever seen and the thought of races up and down it on 50cc scooters became nearly irresistible.

The driver took us on the scenic route down to Moss Beach, through Haight-Ashbury (where I was seized with an urge to tie-dye something, just anything!) and past Golden Gate Park down to the Pacific and along the coast road south. We went through the housing development of uniform little homes that inspired Burl Ives' song describing "little boxes... all made out of ticky-tacky and they all look just the same." Burl was right.

We had made reservations at the hotel in Half-Moon Bay, the next community down from the rental office.. That evening we walked along the beach behind the hotel, wandered through the few streets and ended up at a nondescript little Chinese restaurant next door to a surf shop. I was impressed with how quickly the big city was left behind: less than 30 miles south of the urban sprawl this little town had many unpaved streets and a mix of fine homes and shacks. There were tractors on the highway making their slow way between fields and working pickup trucks, not the jacked up posers sporting stereos and mag wheels, everywhere. We sat on the beach and watched (for me the first time) the sun set in the Pacific while planes from the nearby small airport came in for the night.

The next morning we picked up our bike and headed north. It was cold, about 45 or 50 degrees and the wind was coming off the ocean with moist breezes that misted the low bar-mounted windshield, but nothing could lessen the sheer pleasure of finally riding a motorcycle on the cliffs over the blue Pacific.

Writers much, much my superior have attempted to describe the view and I now know that their efforts were ineffective.... I certainly am not able to tell you how it looks and feels to be on a narrow ribbon of asphalt suspended over rocks and beach, seeming such a long way up from the water below and yet how the vastness of the sea compared to the reference points on land makes it seem close enough to touch. But don't look at it for long, because the road under your wheels curves tortuously along the edge (and I do mean edge) of the drop off to the shore. In places the road had been cut through the rock so that one entered a "canyon" of stone then a hundred yards later, emerged into a curve such that it appeared the

road just ended and went off into the water. We eventually came to trust that there would still be pavement ahead, but never really got jaded to the sheer drama of the view. We worked our way back into San Francisco and onto the Golden Gate Bridge. It doesn't seem as tall or as windy as the Mackinaw Bridge in Michigan (a personal high point on my motorcycle fear-o-meter) but I'd waited a lifetime to cross it and I was suitably impressed. Just past the end, we detoured down into Sausalito for breakfast and to say we'd been there. We sat at the counter of Dave's Coffee shop, across the street from the harbor and watched the Oriental cook perform magic with eggs and pancakes, art from such humble materials.

Bellies filled and with a bit of adjustment to the windshield, we were off again--and promptly lost. I blame it on California's poor road marking, but actually I'm sure I was just sightseeing when I should've been looking for where I was going. There are no real mistakes on bike trips, however, since every road has to go somewhere. We end up in the little town of Mill Valley, a scene that looks so much like a stereotypical sitcom TV town that it finally dawns on me that it was exactly that, many years ago. We see all of it, both ways as I find my way back to Route One, headed for our first tourist stop at Muir Woods.

The road down to the Woods is wonderful, reminding me again of those perfect roads only seen in movies, and again probably because it is one of those roads. It switches back on itself over and over, snaking in and out of the brown brush-covered hills leading down from the coastal ridge to the redwood groves. I'm still too timid to really push the curves, since I am, after all, 2000 miles from home, in unfamiliar territory, riding someone else's bike. At least that's my excuse and I'm sticking

to it. I'd hate to admit that I'm just so dumb-struck by the scenery that I can't keep my eyes on the road.

At Muir Woods we park near the entrance to the trails, remove our gear and make our way into the grove of giant trees. Our path leads us through a narrow corridor of the huge trunks

with their green sheltering canopy far above letting in only enough sunlight to bring a soft surreal lighting on the scene.

There is a peace here, as if some force, some deity (name whatever you choose) wanted it to be this way. The thought of clear-cutting an old growth forest like this

strikes me as an exceptional form of obscenity. One can see life here, as varied and abundant as in the ocean, a whole environment supporting its cast with ease if just left alone.

We backtrack to Highway One again, up the same marvelous hill road and pick it up where we left before. The road here is lined with strange trees, a form of cypress I think, that grows up in a tall tangle of trunks that end suddenly in a flat "umbrella" of foliage at the top---sort of like a row of giant Lyle Lovetts holding vigil over our progress. Soon we begin a descent through the hills until all at once (or so it always seems) the ocean was there in front of us again. More spectacular views,

there aren't enough superlatives in my lexicon to keep describing it, and I'm riding slowly now, partly because of traffic but mostly so I can see what's around me and still not launch us off into the air over the surf below. We stop at Stinson beach, after an incredible winding road down from the ridge to the beach, so that I can check the wheels after running over a



large rock and just to see the sea. The wheels were fine and so was the Pacific.

Highway One here looks like the sliver rim that shows thin and jagged at the edge of a cloud at dusk. It follows the cliffs where the successive breakaways of the shore constantly renew the surface like a glacier slowly sliding into the sea. The "calves" of this process lie in the water below us, forming huge barriers to the surf. Come back in a million years or so, and these building-size rocks will be beach sand and highway one will be several miles east---and still spectacular. We are in a series of rising and falling now as the road climbs to the top of the cliff and then plunges back

down to sea level, over and over, and taking the most circuitous route possible to get there. At the little town of Tomales we stop for lunch at the "oldest saloon in Marin County", circa 1878. The decor is sort of a cross between old European and early John Ford Western, the waitress is like a movie stereotype of a valley girl (she speaks in the declaratory interrogative, where every statement comes out like a question) but the food is good and we just like being here.

Up the road a bit we stop at a craft fair being held in an old school. We want to see if even here there is evidence of the universal urge to make crocheted toilet paper holders. Brenda



examines some of the offerings, but restrains herself. North on the coast road we pass through Valley Ford (up in the hills, away from the sea), Bodega Bay (the gathering spot for the surf crowd, acres of tanned, fit young people staring intently at the ocean like cargo-cult worshippers, waiting for the ship to arrive) and Jenner (where the tourist is king, souvenir shops lining the streets and nouveau-historic architecture) till we stop for the man-

datory pastry break at Sea Ranch.

We fill our calorie-quota for the next six years with carrot cake and cranberry bread pudding in a cafe located in what used to be someone's modest seaside home, before tourists (like us) were so mobile. Fifty more miles that evening and we arrive at Fort Bragg where we find a room at the Surrey Inn and are pleasantly surprised to find that California prices haven't made it this far north. Brenda checks the little information card in our room and learns that there is a microbrewery, the North Coast Brewing Company Taproom and Grill, about six blocks up the street--thus proving that, yes, we are in fact living right.

The food is quite good and I can recommend the Red Seal Ale, the "Old No. 38" Stout and the Scrimshaw Pilsner.

Up early the next morning, I sustain the only injury of the journey when, running across the street to view the ocean at dawn I trip and sprawl ingloriously spread-eagled in the middle of the highway, skinning my palms and severely bruising my dignity. I lay there, stunned and watching the approaching truck and thinking, "no one is ever going to believe this is how I died", so I get up and scramble to

safety. The ocean view is, after all that, worth it.

Our path from here takes us away from the coast, up through the mountains and eventually down into the Napa Valley (which I at first thought would be lined with auto parts stores, but later learned that it had something to do with wine). It's very cold now on this early morning, probably in the high 30's or

low 40's, but we can't let that bother us now. Route 20 from Ft. Bragg to Willett is as near perfect a motorcycle road as I've ever seen and we've got it all to ourselves. Where are the California riders? I guess when you've got wonderful weather most of the year, you don't ride when it's cold....a luxury not afforded to we tourists from back east. Smooth blacktop, looking like it was put down yesterday just for me, winds up into the hills between endless rows of deep green pines, broken only occasionally to allow us to look down into a valley of rocky streams and hills. I start to push the bike just a bit now and the sacked-out rear shock on the rental machine has Brenda up on her toes on the pegs, riding the pillion seat like a rodeo bronco. My speeds are still quite sedate, but just quick enough to be interesting without giving either of us--or the rental guy--cause for worry.

We reach Willett too soon with regard to the ride but just in time with regard to our stomachs and locate a wonderful restaurant. It's a logging town and the eatery is sort of rustic but clean and nice. It caters to both the locals and the tourists, with things like huge potato-pancake, eggs and biscuits breakfasts (which I, ever the morning glutton, order) and blintzes. We meet a British couple, wearing Belstaff riding gear, who tell us that their Beemer is parked just down from ours. The waitress, not Valley-issue this time, but more truckstop-movie-supporting-role, tells us about the good times riding with her husband on his Harley. I decide that I like it here, but Brenda reminds me that this isn't where we live and there are a lot of miles between us and the airport yet to go. The roads become less interesting and more "commercial" as we go south from Willett. Napa Valley, for all its reputation seems quite tame, compared to what we've seen farther west. Rolling fields are pleasant, the vineyards a bit different than

farms back East, but after the coast and mountain roads, it's a bit of a yawn. Seeing the mix of new high-tech machinery and the old (by American standards) farmhouses, one does have to wonder what life would've been like here 100 years ago when this was getting started.

We stop for the obligatory winery tour (Brenda gets to do the tasting while I watch virtuously) at Berringer but we don't really have time to take in the whole operation.

We're on the downhill run of the trip now and we have a schedule to keep. The rental man wants his bike back tomorrow and the airports are quite sticky about holding planes for lolly-gagging motorcyclists. The San Francisco skyline comes back into view all too quickly just as the rain (you didn't think I was going to get away without it, did you?) began. We're too stubborn to put on rain suits and just press on south back to Half Moon Bay. A few miles north, we round a curve just as a sea-kayaker is changing into his wetsuit on the side of the road, bent over, full moon exposed to the on-coming traffic. Brenda briefly ponders leaning out and leaving a Kentucky handprint on this California lunar exhibit, but opts for discretion. He'll never know how close he came.

Monday morning we used up our last hour of rental in a short run south, then turned in the K-bike just on time. The driver delivered us to the airport where we became another bored couple waiting to be packed into a large metal tube flanked by high explosives, ready to be launched into the air at insane speeds high above a very hard earth, held up by the collective willpower of the passengers. We're back now in our old routines, our "real lives", but for that too brief weekend, California dreamin' became a reality.

Cold

By John Rice

In January of 1977, the Ohio River froze over solid enough for cars to drive across. The mercury went down to 25 below zero that month, some of the coldest days on record in Kentucky. On one of those days, I and a dozen or so like minded souls were out in the woods in northern Kentucky, just a few miles from that frozen river, riding trials bikes in the snow.

We had Observed Trials events scheduled far in advance and more than a few in the winter because we were, for the most part, young men and therefore impervious to reason and any arguments that might keep us off of two wheels. In our minimal defense, this kind of weather was unusual to say the least and not in our contemplation when the competition schedule was drawn up in the spring.

So on that January weekend, we gathered at a place named “Rolling Hills” just south of Cincinnati. There was a small restaurant by a lake and beyond that, maybe a hundred acres of, well, rolling hills with trails meandering through the trees and rocky creek beds typical of the area. Around a loop, the organizers had devised trials sections to test the mettle of riders of varying degrees of skill.

But when we arrived that day, the extreme cold meant that none of the spouses and significant others who were to act as scorers for the sections wanted to spend the day freezing in the woods. So they passed the time in the restaurant, with the children who ordinarily

would have been gamboling through the woods, while we few optimists/idiots mounted our bikes and charged into the snowy woods for a self scored event.

Coming prepared for competition, but not the weather, we wore thin leather gloves, ventilated trials helmets, jerseys and jeans. In minutes, we were freezing, but loath to admit it to each other until the crashes started. Combining youthful enthusiasm, iced over trails and cold-enhanced stupidity, bikes began falling with increasing regularity. Many of us had plastic “Preston Petty” fenders on our machines because they were indestructible...until the temperature got into the minus 20 range. These previously malleable fenders, which were so flexible one could tie them in a knot during summer temps, shattered like glass in the extreme cold. Somewhere in the rolling hills of northern Kentucky there are still fragments embedded in the dirt, probably being used as durable nesting materials by enterprising mammals and birds. I would later discover that, despite my firm belief in those days that I was invulnerable, I had frost bitten all of my fingertips, the effects of which would dog me for decades.

Somehow this plastic carnage managed to get through to us that this was a fool’s errand and we shivered our way back to the restaurant to join the smarter ones of our entourage for lunch in the warm. Children, however, having been confined inside, wanted to go out and play for a bit, soon returning with urgent

news. A duck had frozen to the surface of the lake and was in acute distress.

A delegation was dispatched to assess the situation. The lake, like the river, was frozen solid and there was, indeed, a duck firmly attached to its surface. A very unhappy duck. It's billed companions had left it there, saying they had urgent business elsewhere, but would be sure to write. The bird had flapped his wings in a futile attempt at extraction until he was exhausted. We tried gently working fingers under his breast, to no avail. My son was sent back to the restaurant to fetch hot water, which we poured around the duck to loosen the grip. The cold was so severe that the hot water became ice almost immediately upon contact, offering us no help at all. Finally, when it appeared that the frantic fowl was fading fast, I reached as far as I could under the bird with my fingers and yanked.

The duck came free with a sound like industrial strength Velcro being ripped off a kettle

drum and the bird's surprised squawk still reverberates in my memory all these years later. He had a bare spot the size of a playing card on his breast, but he was too exhausted at that point to care.

The bird collapsed in my hands while I carried him back to the restaurant where it was warm inside. I sat him down on the floor. Within minutes, the duck was walking around the place, smacking his webbed feet on the hardwood, quacking indignantly at anyone he encountered, acting as if he owned the facility and why the heck were these people taking up his space?

The actual owner assured us that the bird would be treated kindly and returned to the outside after he'd recovered. Still, I couldn't resist the straight line when someone asked me later "how is the duck?", so I replied "delicious".

Calendar

MOA Getaway Fontana, 4/20/18—4/22/18, Fontana, NC

2018 Great Hopewell Road Rally, 5/4/18-5/6/18, Nelsonville, OH

28th Annual Georgia Mountain Rally, 5/4/18-5/6/18, Hiawassee, GA

5th Annual High Pass Boogie, 5/11/18-5/13/18, Meadows of Dan, VA

European Riders Rally, 5/17/18-5/20-18, Burkesville, KY

18th Annual ROK on Rally, 5/24/18-5/27/18, Del Rio, TN

The Great Chicken Rally, 5/25/18-5/27/18, Dunlap, TN

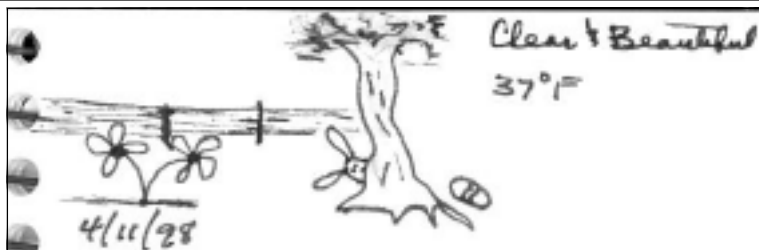


2013 R1200R with a color matched Parabellum Fairing and 20" wind-screen, garage kept, 31k miles, Givi luggage all around, oil cooler guard, hand guards, crash bars, LED auxiliary lighting, and a custom Corbin saddle.

I have all the maintenance records. Will probably need tires in a couple thousand miles, stock other than what is mentioned above. Stock seat available if you want it. More pics available by request.

Clean Title, \$9400 OBO

Todd Fuller, todd@massage4life.biz



THE MOON IS FULL, THERE'S FOG ON THE RIVER,
THERE'S APRIL FROST ALL AROUND,
KEEP YOUR STRING TIGHT, KEEP A FULL QUIVER,
WHAT'S THAT WHISTLING SOUND?...



Here's the group for today:

- * 1). Chris Warner
- * 2). Jim Brandon
- * 3). Hubert Burton
- * 4). Robbie Carter
- * 5). Ryan King
- 6). Phillip Baugh
- 7). Boone Sutherland
- 8). Chester Martin
- 9). Pete Galschis
- 10). Roy Rowlett
- * 11). Drex Neal
- 12). Jeff Crabb
- * 13). Bill Voss
- * 14). Mitch Butler
- * 15). Steve Bishop
- * 16). Gary Huffman
- * 17). Randy Scott (on the Panhead)
- 18). Darlene Huffman
- * 19). Mike Gill (p.l.o.)
- * 20). Russell Traine (p.l.o.)

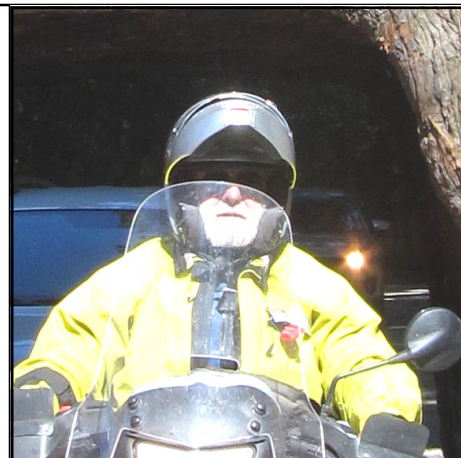
Boone

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 re-read the last 10 pages or so) but I don't want to give them away for good. At least not yet.

John Rice



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 Motorcycling By David Hough
Tales of Triumph Motorcycles & the Meriden Factory:
By Hancox
Sport Riding Techniques By Nick Ienatasch
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 circumnavigation 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
Revolutionary Ride By Lois Pryce
How to Drive a Sidecar Rig by David Hough

