

December 2021
Apex
Looking Through The Curve

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



Frosty Freeze—Ezel

Sidestands up!

(Pylon drivers and broken bones)

By John Rice

Trying to extend the touring season just a bit, four of us met at Gateway Cycles in Mt. Sterling just as the morning sun was beginning to take some control over the nighttime's cold. Our plan was to meander down to Jenny Wiley State Park for an overnight and then wind our way home. There were three BMW's, my 310GS, Jay Smythe's 310R, Ben Prewitt's R100RT and Paul Elwyn's HD Sportster.

We spent a pleasant hour or so inside the bike-crammed showroom at Gateway, talking motorcycles with Carl, the owner of the shop, and lusting over Guzzi's and Kawasaki 400's.

Paul, who might actually be serious about a purchase, took an 850 adventure model out for a test ride. Jay took the 400 off for a short get-acquainted run (encountering a guy in a Jeep who did his best to end Jay's ride) and I, who figured out quickly that the 400's peg/seat juxtaposition and my knees were incompatible for a long term relationship, just noodled it around the parking lot for a bit. There was a Moto Guzzi 850 adventure model in red and white which looked from the saddle a lot like my old R100GS/PD, one of my all-time favorite bikes. I got off the machine quickly before the

mist could descend over my eyes and I would be reaching for my checkbook.

Route 60 to Morehead is a familiar road, but a pretty good one nonetheless with some decent curves and enough tree cover remaining to keep the morning sun from blinding us. An early lunch stop at Root-a-Baker's revealed a rearranged store with no indoor seating and, most shocking no pie available! Still, the food was good, the outdoor table most pleasant and the muffins, while not pie, sufficed to fulfill our calorie quota for the time being.

Route 32 south of Morehead is a premier motorcycle road with curve after swooping curve following a ridgeline. For the first few miles we were behind extremely slow cars, driven reluctantly by people apparently all on their way to visit their dreaded in-laws, but eventually we managed to break free.

The bends on 32 are more fun on the 310 than I remember on other, larger, bikes recently, the smaller machine more nimble, and willing to be tossed back and forth. I am

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Jeff Crabb, Editor jdcraab@hotmail.com

Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

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Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd.

in Lexington, Kentucky on any Saturday, 8-9:00 a.m.

**BMW Club
Bluegrass Beemers**





At Root-a-Bakers for lunch

much less confident in my abilities these days, but this bike makes it easy for me.

At Blaine, we dropped down to Rt. 201, another winding bit of Kentucky motorcycle road headed south. Mid-afternoon we encountered a stop for road repair, not an unusual thing here in the eastern hills where Mother Nature constantly reminds us that our attempts at paving the cow paths are merely temporary inconveniences to her. We thought that the construction traffic light would change in a minute or so, as had always been the case with such things, but this one went on and on in red mode, stretching into more than 15 minutes. There was a pylon driver, a huge drop-hammer of a thing, pounding beams into the earth to stabilize the deteriorating roadbed and it seemed that the operator wanted to finish his entire row before letting the traffic through. As time passed, we decided to get comfortable

and put down our stands to get off and walk around.

Then the day took a very different direction. I heard a sudden expletive and looked behind to see Ben's R100RT falling over, victim of the infamous BMW self-retracting sidestand, the downhill slope and an off-camber situation, all working together to make a simple often-done task suddenly dangerous. After the first rush of adrenaline had helped to get the bike upright and began to subside, Ben discovered a bump under the skin that hadn't been there before and realized that he had broken his collarbone.

Though such injuries can be extremely painful, Ben, tougher than most, said it wasn't too bad ("it only hurts when I move") and decided to ride his bike on to our destination and stop at the hospital on the way for an x-ray.

Near the park, we went to the Appalachian Regional Hospital in Prestonsburg where our experience was not bad, overall, given that one has been injured and in need of medical service. There were only a few people in the waiting room, and masks were required. Ben was seen quickly, but then the x-ray took a while to arrange. The doc confirmed that the bone was broken, though not separated, more



Ben's shoulder

of what we used to call a "greenstick" fracture but the structural integrity was compromised, meaning that Ben should refrain from further gymnastic dismounts for the foreseeable future. A nurse, who said she also rode motorcycles and therefore knew it was useless to tell Ben not to ride on, gave advice regarding non-drowsy painkillers and sent us on our way.

We were out of the hospital and on the way to the rooms in about two hours, not bad for a modern medical experience.

At the park we got the bikes secured in the lot, made the trek over to our rooms and quickly made arrangements for supper. The restaurant is

"carry out only" on Monday and Tuesday in these COVID-reduced travel times, so orders were placed and the lodge manager herself brought them to our rooms.

Well fed and with a bit of bourbon for lubricant, our collective brain trust set to work and quickly solved all of the problems of the world, except for the minor one of getting everyone else in the world to agree with our solutions. Their loss, I think.

In the morning, being now Wednesday, the lodge restaurant was open. Though the lot is full of cars, we three were the only diners at 7 AM, indicating that motorcyclists are more ambitious and raring to go than four-wheelers. Or just that old men get up earlier.

As we BMW airhead caretakers know, each bike is unique and has its own personality. No one really "owns" an immortal airhead, we are each just their temporary companion, keeping them company until they move along to the next one, even if that takes decades. Ben's RT apparently felt miffed that attention was being paid to its rider instead of



Awaiting Dinner

the more important machine, so decided to take back some control.

In the cold morning, we make our way over to the bikes for the return trip, but Ben's bike makes an ungodly squealing noise on startup. The noise is distressing, as is the fact that the engine stops suddenly when switched off, suggesting that something is binding rotating parts which are complaining bitterly about the restriction. We disassemble the oil cooler and front cover, hoping to find something loose in the starter, something that a bit of wrench attention would fix. Unfortunately, no such luck. It is puzzling, since the bike was started twice after the tipover and made the nearly 50 mile trip from there to the park without any protest. "Ran when parked" as the saying goes. Phone calls to Roy indicated that this problem wasn't going to be properly sorted in the parking lot, so Paul made arrangements for a rental trailer and Ben made plans with his wife Gail to come down with their SUV and dog for an additional night added to his trip. We made sure that park maintenance men, sturdy young fellows, would be available to help him load up the bike.

Jay & I were dispatched to Prestonsburg to find adequate tie-down straps. This errand led to another of those, "back in my day" discussions, since Prestonsburg's motorcycle dealers are now gone and instead of going into a proper shop and picking up real motorcycle tie-downs, we had to be content with an Ace Hardware offering camo-print ratchet straps. Yes, I know

they will work for the purpose, but it is not The Way Things Should Be.

Paul, Jay and I left Ben, awaiting his rescue by Gail, and headed south. The route I had chosen took 80 south, supposedly 18 miles to 1098, but the four digit road did not make an



Ran when Parked

appearance where it should have. I went on a bit, then not wanting to lead us further on a four lane, then turned around to seek gas for Paul's Sportster and a re-think of the plan. As we were backtracking, Jay's sidestand suddenly parted company with the bike, shutting

off the ignition. A roadside search failed to turn up the peripatetic bolt and bushing, leading to our second episode for the day of lying on the ground beside a motorcycle. Eventually we fell back on the Universal Fix, zip ties, securing the stand back up in position to allow the switch to work and ignition to be restored. Fortunately Jay's bike has an added center-stand or he would have been looking for a tree to lean it on at stops.

Paul should write this trip up for the H-D magazine with the headline "Two Thirds of BMW's break down while lone Harley soldiers on"

We opted for the more direct route home from here, up twisty Route 7 to Salyersville, then 460 through West Liberty. I had hoped that there would be a local restaurant and pie stop there, as had been the case before the tornado's devastation a few years back, but no such luck. The town has been rebuilt anew, but somehow they forgot to consider including someplace good to eat.

On the north side of town we got behind an enormous funeral procession, so long that from the back we never saw the front. By Ezel we had had enough and pulled into a local non-chain dairy bar and got sustenance. A banana split for Jay, "corn poppers" and a butterscotch milkshake for me and a barbecue special for Paul. Somewhere a dietitian is suddenly feeling faint, but this is, as any rider knows, an adequate motorcycle trip lunch.

A few miles up the road, we made a quick stop at Broke Leg Falls to see the tornado damage. The same twister that ravaged West Liberty made a pass through this tiny park and left its former peaceful beauty in a tangled mess of uprooted trees and jumbled rocks. Once a spot for rest and repose, it now is a monument to nature's ability for destruction on a grand scale.

By Mt. Sterling, a gas stop was in order and the familiar pull of home was asserting itself in the fading light. We split up for our respective destinations, hoping that there would be another opportunity to do this again soon. Minus the sidestand episodes.



Seen at the 2010 Mid-Ohio Vintage Days



WE HAVE A NEW DEALER NAMED JEFF,
WHO, WITH NUMBERS, WILL NEED TO BE DEFT,
LET'S GIVE HIM SUPPORT,
OR WE'LL GET A REPORT,

THAT OUR NEW BEEMER DEALER HAS LEFT...



Here's the group for today:

- *1). Mary Beards (1285012) - MATH TEACHER LCC - FROM L.A.
- *2). Jim Brenden
- *3). Boone Sutherland
- 4). Chester Martin
- 5). Pete Galisbi
- 6). Phillips Baugh
- *7). Ryan King
- *8). Robbie Carter
- *9). Bill Voss
- *10). John Rice
- 11). Joe Burk
- *12). Paul Ebyen
- 13). David Sprashman
- 14). Chris Warren
- 15). Robert "Red" McClelland
- 16). Greg Quinn "Snow"
- 17). Mike Gild
- *18). Randy Scott
- 19). Russell Travis
- 20). "Julio" (Mike's friend who makes jewelry!)

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