

November 2021

# Apex

*Looking Through The Curve*

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



# Together

By James Street

Slowly climbing into the clouds this morning while following an undulating, curving bit of asphalt that flowed through mature forests of evergreen and deciduous trees alternating with mountain laurel lined verges, Stacey and I entered the Blue Ridge Parkway near its north terminus this morning for a ride through to Cherokee, North Carolina, at its southern end. Several years have passed since I last rode a bike on the Blue Ridge, but it remains one of my favorite motorcycling destinations for many reasons. Twisting through hollow and valley, it provides a constant riding challenge that rewards travelers with vistas overlooking the valleys of what has to be one of the most verdantly beautiful regions of the North American continent.

At times we were flying over views of nothing but the wispy white tops of clouds that enveloped the broad tree-lined valleys, and at others we were treated to miles of views of rolling hills decorated with picturesque towns. After a long day of fairly exhausting riding-I'm out of shape for long rides-we arrived at the Buffalo Tavern, a bed and breakfast in West Jefferson, North Carolina. One distinction garnered by the Buffalo Tavern was that alcohol was served uninterrupted through Prohibition, as apparent payoffs were made to the



Looking out over cloud covered valleys

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Back issues of *Apex* can be accessed on our website  
Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd.  
in Lexington, Kentucky on any Saturday, 8-9:00 a.m.**

**BMW Club  
Bluegrass Beemers**



local constabulary. As I'm writing this we're paying homage to that history and enjoying a glass of wine on the front porch and watching night envelope the day.

This is our-Stacey and me-first bike trip in probably a decade and it's really nice to be back in the saddle again: there's no together like together on a motorcycle.

While yesterday provided a kaleidoscope of riding experience thanks to variation in altitude and weather, today's ride was a passage through varying hues of gray. We awoke to the pleasant sound of rain on the roof of the Buffalo Inn, our B&B for the night, and I optimis-

tically thought it was just a transient shower. My friend John Rice believes he is a rain magnet when he leaves on a motorcycle adventure and today I must have channeled his attraction to downpours, as it has rained a deluge almost all day. As we gained altitude leaving West Jefferson, the deluge we started out in was replaced by pea soup fog that returned to rain, and the pattern repeated itself every half hour or so as we delicately wove our way along pavement strewn with newly fallen leaves, rivulets of water, and the occasional gravel wash. Riding on days like today are a lesson in precision and control, not to mention the accompanying exhaustion from maintaining a degree of vigilance that's not easy to sustain.



A break in the rain





Socked in!

All that said, I don't mind riding in the rain. Arriving at the Mount Pisgah Inn was a nice reward for the perseverance of the day as the respite of dry and warm accommodation is a balm after being soaked and chilled for hours.

I discovered the Mount Pisgah Inn decades ago on another Blue Ridge bike trip where I was riding solo from the southern end of the Parkway, ascended into an ocean of impenetrable fog, and immediately stumbled upon its entrance. With no prior knowledge of Pisgah, I checked in for relief from riding while virtually blind and was rewarded with an astounding view of the North Carolina eastern plateau

the next morning after the fog cleared and learned that every room offers a balcony with that same vista. Wanting that perspective again, I booked our trip around the one evening here that we get a room. Alas, it's not to be. As I write this we're socked in by clouds and wind that are literally a wall of white and rattling the building. Hope it follows the pattern of my first visit and breaks by morning...

After a night of fitful sleep listening to the wind rattle the windows and rain hitting the roof we awoke to another day of dismal falling weather. Having inquired about staying another night and learning that no rooms were

available, I knew that we'd have to ride somewhere to find refuge from the storm and that refuge was likely over an hour away regardless of which direction we took. Our breakfast reservations were at 7:45, so we hiked through the wind-driven rain to the dining room. For a few moments while we were there the fog lifted and we could see the outline of the smoky grey rolling ridge lines as they faded into a cloud hidden horizon. Walking back to the room after our necessary coffee and delicious breakfast, the weather was a bit less brutal, and at glance at the weather radar suggested that we should be able to get into clear skies if we could shuttle west of Asheville. Making a decision to run for it, we donned our wet weather gear, loaded up, punched "home" on the GPS, and turned north on the Parkway to take the first road that fell off Mt. Pisgah

towards Asheville. Turning left onto State Highway 151 had us plummeting off the ridge line and winding down on smooth pavement towards

what we hoped to be sanctuary from the nasty weather the Blue Ridge had thrown at us, but the weather had also provided another challenge: Highway 151 was rain soaked and completely covered in wet leaves that lowered the adhesion of the bike's tires to something comparable to riding on ice. Not wanting to test the limits of wet weather traction with Stacey on board, I dialed the throttle way back and gingerly picked my way through the endless switchbacks and turns. At one point Stacey, whose eyes were apparently glued to the GPS speed readout, said we were going seven miles per hour. I will return to North Carolina 151 someday, as it was an ideal road to burn up when dry and clear; however, it was a relief to finally reach the bottom and get on level ground without the carpet of leaves. Somewhere along the way the rain stopped, and we



Buffalo Tavern





Trusty old Triumph-2002 Trophy 1200

were greeted by a KFC restaurant (why the owners of Kentucky Fried Chicken would think that calling it KFC would make us all think fried chicken is health food is beyond my comprehension). We fueled up a mile

were able to somewhat relax and dry out.

As we wound our way west of Asheville, our route paralleled the French Broad River in its angry swollen and brown churning flow that was its response to the same rain that we were escaping. Our GPS took us north and west along Bear Creek where we saw fly fishermen casting their undulating lines for trout that were enjoying the oxygenated flow from all the rain. It was a picturesque setting with the rushing water across a boulder strewn creek bed and the fishermen with waders standing in knee-deep water.

US 25 provided a route past the Clinch Mountain Cafe whose claim to fame is vinegar pie and, although tempting, this time we didn't stop. Through the Cumberland Gap tunnel into Middlesboro marked our arrival back into our home state of Kentucky. Appropriately, we

or so beyond the KFC and then set forth on a familiar road to home.

This was the first motorcycle trip we've taken together since 2009 and it's another adventure we've enjoyed since selling our boat and moving to land. We were good on a boat I, as Stacey made herself indispensable with her sail trim, meteorological knowledge and line handling, and I'd almost forgotten how good she is on a bike. I ride aggressively and as we left home and got on the back roads that I most enjoy, I felt Stacey lean forward into me as I heeled the bike into the first moderately sharp turn which is an essential part of being a good pillion rider. It was immediately apparent that our connection on the bike, dormant since 2009, was still there. As I said previously, there's no together like together on a motorcycle. To say we enjoyed our adventure of the last four days is an understatement.



WE'RE INTO OCTOBER, THE RALLY IS OVER,  
LET'S CRUISE AMONG FALLING LEAVES,  
LET'S BURN THE ROADS, DODGE THE TOADS,

SOON WE WILL DO CHRISTMAS EVES ... (HUBB) 

Here's the group for today:

- \* 1). Boone Sutherland
- 2). Roy Rowlett
- \* 3). Mike DeLoose
- \* 4). Hubert Burton
- \* 5). Chris Warner
- \* 6). Joe Bark
- \* 7). Tom Keller
- \* 8). Bill Voss
- 9). Ron Adkins
- \* 10). Ben Pruitt
- 11). Pete Galskis
- \* 12). Jim Koury
- \* 13). Randy Scott
- 14). Dan Bennett
- 15). Dray Neal
- \* 16). Mike Gregory (p.L.D.)

*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