1976 Honda CB400F Supersport   
 Peg is a dear friend and enthusiastic motorcyclist. We road-raced together back in the day and she rides regularly still, including Gyros and the occasional RetroTour. From time to time, she had mentioned that there was a CB400F way back in the basement that, sadly, sat languishing there for years. Oh, the things we Americans have stashed in our garages and basements! My wife Lynn had a couple of 400 fours over the decades which I rode from time to time.   
What a fun bike!

It all started with a very sedate, competent --but maybe a little boring-- 350cc in line four. Then, in 1975, this slightly larger capacity model pushed the café styling trend along, with its signature bread-loaf fuel tank, sporty Euro-handlebars, rear-set footrests, 10,000 RPM redline, and of course, those sensuous header pipes, snaking provocatively down the front of the motor.  
The stock suspension was decent, and combined with the willing engine and stout (if portly) frame, the end result was a bike that could be ridden hard: miles of smiles. The eager little motor could even sustain cruising speeds up to 80 mph if you crawled under the paint for aerodynamic efficiency (and emotional satisfaction).

One day in the winter of 2023 Peg called and said it was time to clear out the basement; did I want to pick up the CB400F? No need to ask twice, Fred and I left before dawn in the F150 pick-up and drove 6 hours to Boston to grab it, then turned around and drove 6 hours back. Job done? Er, not quite. The decades of inactivity had extracted the usual toll: complete carb overhaul, hydraulic brake system rebuild, fork seals, tires and inner tubes, ignition tune-up, battery, steering stop repair, and of course, major de-rusting of all components. This was no restoration, although the cost and extent of the repairs might seem to be. The cosmetics were cleaned up as best as possible but all the original paint and chrome (and yes, some of the rust) remains. At least the headers look pretty good. But hey, this ain’t no fashion show, all right? The machine is in very sound operating condition. It looks decent, but above all, it is a freakin’ blast to ride. Everyone who gets off the seat wears a huge grin. The bike is so well balanced that the rider feels a real connection, and anyway, isn’t it more fun to go fast on a slow-ish bike? With only 8,000 miles on the clock the motor feels fresh, and the 6-speed gearbox seduces the rider into exploring the limits of its 5 figure RPM potential. It’s a Honda, so reliability and longevity are to be expected.

With all said and done, we invested over $1700 in repair work and settled with Peg for a very modest purchase price with certain stipulations: the bike is to be shared with others via RetroTours, and Peg has the first right of refusal should it ever come up for sale….  
 ….which is highly unlikely.