

Saturday, June 18, 2016.....Local Loops I

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Local Local Loops I was booked out early by a group (not a club) loosely known as the "Fender Benders". There were 12 machines fielded and everyone got to ride every machine that they wanted to. Besides 12 'Benders' my old friend and world wide riding partner Bob Gould came down from New Hampshire to co-guide the event. Two of the 12 'Benders' were passengers: one in the sidecar which I mostly drove and one rode as pillion with her old man; I mean husband.

We departed from a nearby commercial site where the bikes were stored after dealing with a sudden open circuit in the Laverda's battery. I love the new gel cell maintenance free batteries but I hate that they never weaken, they just suddenly become totally dead. This one was 7 years old so my only complaint is with the lack of warning. I dealt with it by limping the bike 2 miles to the house and returning after 10 minutes on the BMW. After this minor inconvenience we made our way west on back roads, paralleling Route One and reaching the edge of Chester County at the Pine Grove covered bridge which crosses the Octoraro River into Lancaster County. In addition to seeing some Amish brethren in horse drawn buggies we stopped at Robert Fulton's House. Here there is a \$4 charge to enter the house but the toilets are free. After noticing that everyone used the toilets but no one paid to enter the house we decided that the Historical Society, if it had any business sense at all, would make entry to the house free and charge instead to use the toilets. Please keep that to yourself though; I hate to pay to pee.

From there we passed through some very peaceful and scenic farm country, then skirted a large reservoir, crossing route 372 near the Holtwood Dam and following the Susquehanna north about 5 miles to Pinnacles State Park. The view from 1700 feet above the river is picture post card perfect.

After returning to earth we crossed the river at the Holtwood Dam Bridge then turned south, following the west bank past the Peach Bottom Nuclear Power Plant. Years ago we used to ride our ATV's on that expansive property while the reactor was shut down for some 7 years after the controller was repeatedly found asleep at the controls. The last time we tried that was post 9/11 and we immediately ran into a platoon of military personal who escorted us away from the now on-line reactor quite swiftly. Crossing into Maryland, we rode back across the Susquehanna over the Connewingo Dam. It occurred to me at that point that this was one Dam fine ride. The weather could have been a few degrees cooler perhaps but no one complained; it was as near to perfect as it gets. That's the thing about the weather: everyone complains about it but nobody does anything!



A stop in Rising Sun, MD at a small Mexican restaurant named Riviera Maya.

I checked this tiny Mexican restaurant out on the internet and decided that even if the food was bad, at least they have good furniture. In fact the food was also pretty good and the service was terrific. They rearranged the entire dining room just for us and we had the place to ourselves. We actually ate more than we should have considering the dinner that was being prepared back at home. Remounting, we next followed the Mason-Dixon Line east for a bit before turning back north and re-entering Pennsylvania at Lewisville, picking up Route 841.



PARKED UP IN RISING SUN, MARYLAND



We followed 841 for it's entire length, with a slight deviation to pass Peacedale Preserve where I considered stopping for a break. It was very hot by then and there was not a stitch of shade in that otherwise lovely spot so I decided to keep moving then stopped instead at the ChesLen Preserve near Embreeville. Here there was shade and clean toilets. We were beginning to tire and took good advantage of the break. People vaped, smoked cigars, drank water, talked old bikes and socialized while enjoying the views.

The final stop was at the High School. Some of us lounged in the shade while other more energetic individuals tried various old bikes on the 7 mile self-guided loop, using the route sheets provided. Finally we made our way to the commercial start/finish point and returned to the house at around 7 for a delicious outdoor dining experience created by my wife Lynn. As is often the case, I heard muttering about how the dinner was the best part of the ride.

Yup, that was our motto for the day : RIDE TO EAT, EAT TO RIDE.

THE BIKES:

R100/S/RS/EML sidecar rig

Ducati 860GT

Yamaha TX750

Rickman/Royal Enfield Interceptor 750

Suzuki T500

Moto Guzzi Ambassador 750

Moto Guzzi V50

Moto Morini Strada 500

Benelli 650 Tornado

Triumph Bonneville 650

Yamaha RD400

BMW R90/6

THE RIDERS

Chris Jones

Kathleen Jones (monkey)

Jacek Szymak

Katarzyna Szymak (pillion)

James McCrea

Laura Tracey

G. Windsor Tracey

George Bicocchi

Steve Doughtey

Pete Badgio

Jeffrey Simmons

Bob Gould (co-guide)

