

WAGNER CUSTOM TOUR Saturday June 15,2019
“The Pinnacles, Columbia/Classic Cars, and Watches”

Sebastian Wagner.....PA.....	1976 Honda GL1000	Chris Bowen..... PA.....	own
Marc Ivanowski..... FL.....	1975 Ducati 860GT	Luigi Xerri.....PA.....	own
Winni Hesel.....PA.....	1977 Harley XLCR1000	Edgar Stach..... PA.....	own
Stefan Neubig.....PA.....	1974 BMW R90/6	Zbigniew Jankowski..... PA.....	own
Michael Speidel..... GERMANY..	1970 Triumph 650 Bonneville	Ciro Ruggiero..... PA.....	own
Brad Jacobs..... PA.....	1977 BMW R100S/EML sidecar	Andrea Zanellotti..... ITALY..	own
		Fredk Moesler.....PA.....	own

This was a unique, interesting and FUN custom tour with a fantastic international component.

Sebastian is from Germany and was living here in PA for several years while working for SAP, which is:

“a German multinational software corporation that makes enterprise software to manage business operations and customer relations. The company is especially known for its ERP software. SAP is headquartered in Walldorf, Baden-Württemberg, Germany with regional offices in 180 countries.”

SAP has a facility not far from here with employees from all over the world, so this tour included riders from Germany, Italy and other countries, all united not only through their careers, but also through a love of riding motorcycles, which transcends language and cultural barriers. While most of their licenses were issued by the state of Pennsylvania, most of these guys were from overseas, living here temporarily for work. It was a diverse international group of riders, and a bunch of great guys.,

Sebastian had first contacted me months earlier and even visited for a one-hour check-out ride around the neighborhood. He then did a fantastic job organizing, with typical German efficiency, and recruited 12 of his friends and co-workers. Seven of them would ride their own modern motorcycles, five would use RetroTours bikes, and one would ride in the RetroTours sidecar rig, with me driving.

The route is one that we use often. ‘The Pinnacles’ is a very nice one-day ride up to Columbia, PA with several interesting stops along the way. This time we were able to add a classic car show: “Thunder on the River” and a tour of the National Watch and Clock Museum, one of a very few museums in the United States dedicated solely to horology, which is the history, science and art of timekeeping and timekeepers. As a bonus, Brad, who rode in the chair, is a former volunteer at the museum, and was able to act as our exclusive docent, providing extra insight into the museum’s exhibits. He also took some great photos and films of our ride.

Folks arrived punctually at 8:15 for our 8:30 breakfast. Normally my wife does the cooking but as she was out of town, our friend Lucille took on the task, and she did a great job. This ride had an unusually high percentage of riders on their own bikes, some of which were not exactly vintage, and I was concerned about how the pace would suit the mix of modern and antique bikes. We discussed such matters over breakfast and completed the necessary paperwork. The weather was looking very fine as we assembled in the driveway to go over starting procedures.

Obviously looking forward to the day’s adventure, this group of four drove in with the top down...already ‘in the wind’.

Left to right are Marc, Stefan, Sebastian, and Michael.

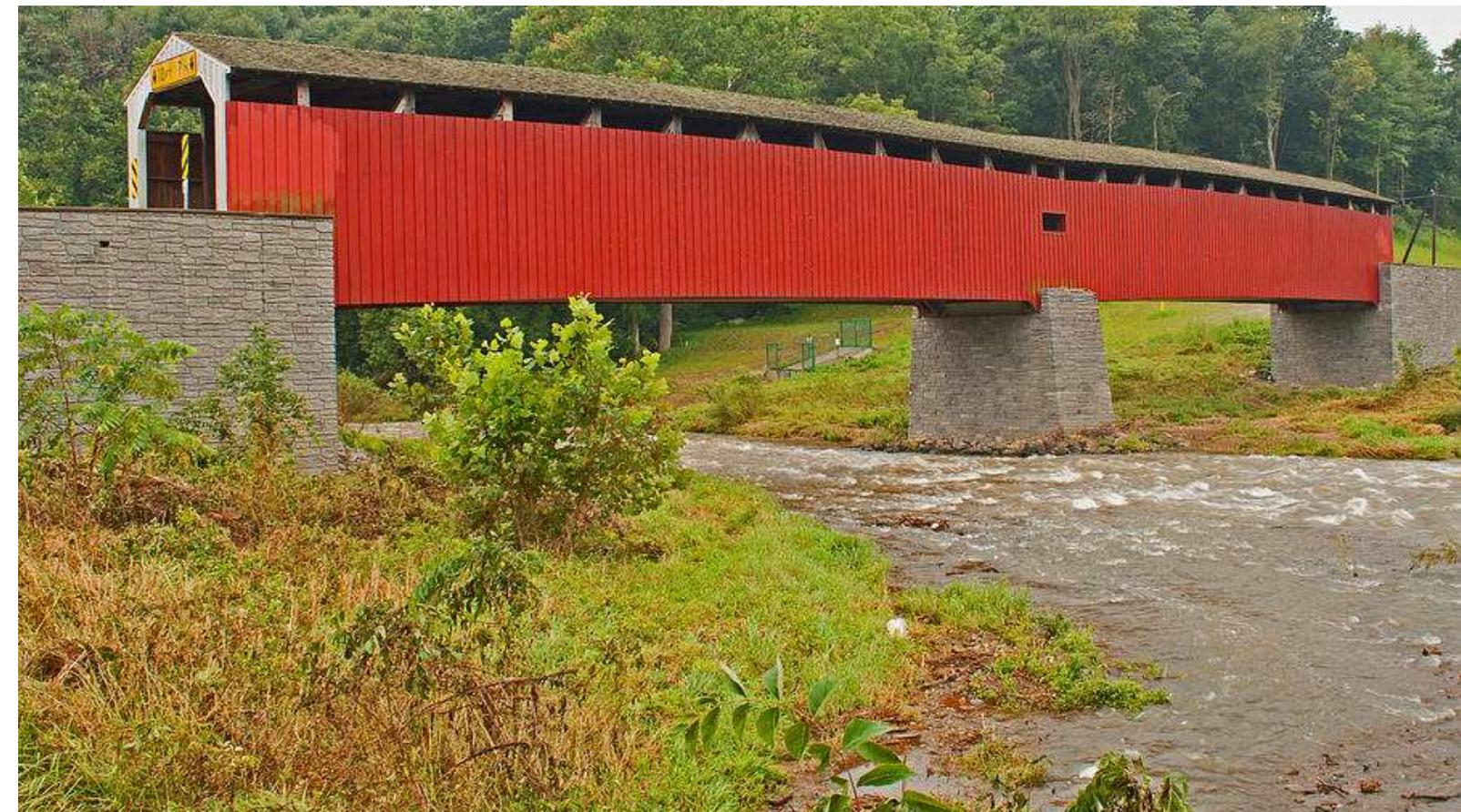




At the breakfast riders' meeting we go over the route and group riding procedures.

Incredibly, all 13 of us manage to get running and negotiate the long twisty driveway without any issues. Once we are out on the road it becomes obvious that these enthusiasts all know how to ride. Our progress is moderate and smooth as we complete a 5-mile 'check out loop', then use a convoluted series of back roads to parallel route one south and west.

We cross the scenic Octoraro Reservoir where a double-long covered bridge spans the border between Chester and Lancaster County; at once we are swept back in time, into Amish country.



A bit further on, at mile 35, we take a short break at the Robert Fulton House. I wish I could take credit for the weather. It is the kind of day that makes riding a classic motorbike a giddy experience. We partake of snacks and cold water from the trunk of the sidecar, talk about bikes, and soon are back on the road.

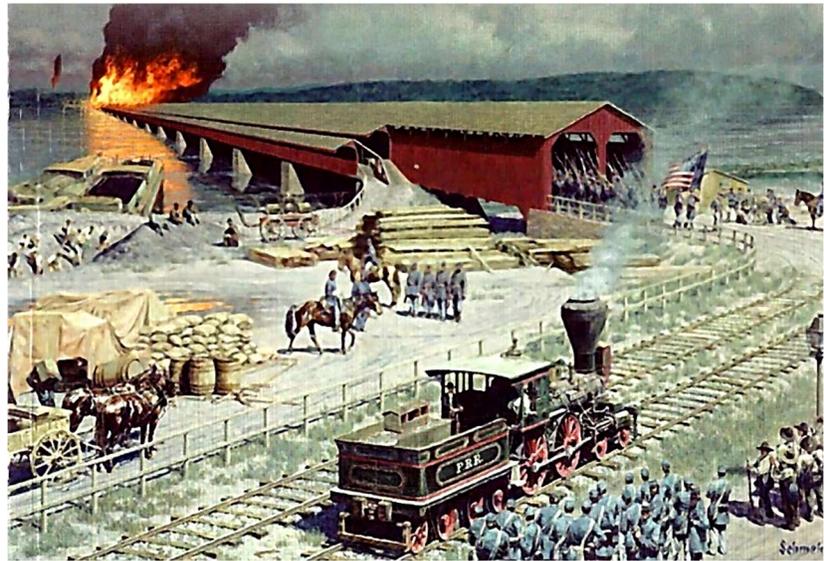


Next, we negotiate the fertile Amish farmlands known as Peach Bottom, then begin to climb, paralleling the Susquehanna River, heading north, then turning off to check out The Pinnacles State Park. After a short hike to admire the view we try to continue riding but must first deal with a small technical glitch on one of the modern bikes. A poor electrical connection has made the electric starter non-functional, and being modern, of course there is no kick starter back up. This is soon remedied, and our next stop will be Columbia, where the entire old center city has been given over to a classic car show. There are several blocks closed to traffic and we wonder along endless rows of gorgeous old American cars and trucks, and even a few motorcycles. The heat of the day is upon us now, and our largish group fragments somewhat, but we regroup at an excellent, thankfully air-conditioned restaurant where we commandeer a long table and enjoy lunch.

Fed, watered, and refreshed, we walk 4 or 5 blocks to the Watch Museum where our bikes are parked. Inside, we are quite impressed by the displays. Several of our group are real timepiece enthusiasts, and Brad helps us relate to the exhibits with his explanations. It is quite special to arrive at this museum with our own horological expert to help interpret what we are seeing. In addition, Brad seems to be taking to the sidecar very well. As ballast, he is surely one of the best. On the way out we cross the river, over a mile wide at this point, on the splendid Wrightsville Bridge. We top up our fuel tanks then turn north along the west bank of the river.



Some amazing vehicles were on display and the displays seemed to stretch on forever, kind of like this car.



When built, it was the longest multiple arch concrete bridge in the world. The old Wrightsville Covered Bridge was burned by Union soldiers during the Civil War to stop the advance of Confederate troops toward Harrisburg.

The ride home from Columbia was along traffic free curvy roads in Maryland, along the Susquehanna River. To cross back to the east bank, we rode over the Conowingo Dam after taking a break at the base to admire the view. We had another minor glitch to deal with here, again, one of the modern bikes. The final mechanical chore of the day tested us just a few miles from home. We met the challenge and back at home, enjoyed a cool beverage on the back porch followed by an incredible gourmet meal, ala Lucille. I must give a special thanks to her for her culinary efforts, as well as to Sebastian who is back in Germany by now. Sebastian did all the hard work of “herding the cats” by organizing the large-ish international group. This day was truly special, in large part because of Brad’s excellent guided tour of the Watch Museum. Besides his horological explanations, Brad also did a great job of weighing down the sidecar. As if that were not enough, he also took hundreds of excellent photos and made several cool short films which can be accessed via this link: https://1drv.ms/f/s!AphxF0jw9JV-6CTKy-WPs_a6U-Up . Marc also took lots of interesting pictures: <https://1drv.ms/u/s!Av3WUvi1WanggcBeA4GqX8v-YJ9aEA?e=KXmaUG> . Lastly, I would like to thank the Lord above for granting us such a beautiful day for riding, and for making all our mechanical problems occur on the modern bikes.



