

RetroRideReport: British European Classic Bike Day/ Sunday May 20, 2012

A one day RetroTour. What a fine idea for local riders. Joe had suggested it several weeks ago. He wanted to ride a classic bike to this event and had 6 or 8 friends who were also interested. It seemed like a good idea so I made it a late addition to the RetroTours 2012 schedule. Russ liked the idea too and sent in a deposit right away. Unfortunately, none of Joe's friends were able to make the commitment so it was just the three of us for the day. Russ liked the Triumph on a previous visit and requested it again. Joe's first choice was the Rickman Royal Enfield but it's getting painted so he settled for the BSA Lightning. I choose the Moto Morini to provide some variety as well as some fun. We met here at 6:30 for breakfast and departed at 7 AM. A local dealership had asked me to lead customers from there so we rode first to Powersports East in Bear, Delaware to see if any riders might show at 8 AM on new or classic bikes. There was a group of 4 or 5 Harley riders but they were arriving late and seemed a bit disorganized so I left them with route sheets showing our intended back roads route and an optional highway route. We three on vintage bikes were on the back roads route of course and I estimated 4 or 5 hours to get there so we left on time at 8 and never did see the Harley guys again.



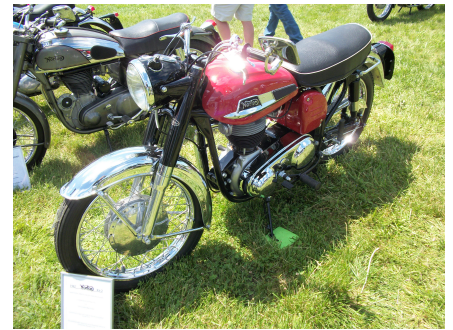
A relaxed pace across Maryland brought us to the area of the event in Clarksburg at around noon time. We decided to eat at a local deli before entering the grounds at 12:30.



A nice shady spot with picnic tables let us get the kinks out and enjoy a sandwich after our 4 hour trot along some of Maryland's lovely back roads. We took a short break every 50 miles and swapped bike after 100 miles. During the day's travels we each got to sample all three bikes and got to know each other better. One thing that made switching bikes easier: all three have right hand shifters, with up for up patterns.

We entered the 'fairgrounds' and parked. There were a good number of attendees and many long lines of beautiful pristine classics as well as some well worn runners. Most of the old bikes were brought in on trucks and trailers and together with the swap meet vendors, eye candy was everywhere.





Hey Russ, if you like Nortons so much how come you decided to ride the Triumph?

We strolled the attractions until nearly 3 o'clock when things were beginning to wind down so we geared up for the ride home. An ice cream stop on the way helped combat the unusually warm weather. Every time we stopped people would ask about our bikes of course and all three performed admirably, although the Triumph developed an annoying rattle right at 3,000 RPM. We made it home just before 8 PM and my wife Lynn had a delicious meal of venison steaks ready for us. It was 150 miles each way from home to Clarksburg so at 300 total miles, a very full day. The reality of riding classic bikes is that it can be physically challenging, especially the first few days. With little time to acclimate on a one day ride, we were all pretty sore and stiff. Russ and Joe were soon headed for home. After a good night's sleep I was ready to clean the bikes and get them ready for another outing the very next weekend.





THE OBLIGATORY GROUP PHOTO