

WILLIAMSPORT, PA. AUGUST 19-20 2017



The Susquehanna: our campground.

We've run trips to Williamsport several times over the years. Aside from the remoteness and natural splendor of the surrounding countryside, there was a Honda shop in town, Bob Logue's Honda, that had a "Honda Museum" in the back room. It was filled with a fantastic assortment of machines including tiny Honda micro-cars, Honda motorcycles, scooters and ATV's or every sort, and even a Honda Snow Fox: a radical prototype snowmobile, one of only two known to still exist, that never made it into production.



Then, several years ago, I called to check on the museum's open hours and was told that the museum was sold to Dave Silver, a well-known British purveyor of obsolete Honda parts. I found a paddle wheel steamer that looked interesting, but the year we got there the river conditions had it shut down. There was still a really good burger joint in town, but I needed something more. I was close to scrubbing the destination when I made contact with Bob Logue who graciously invited me and a small group of riders to visit him at his family farm, where he still had "a few" interesting old motorcycles around.

Only one rider signed up, so I felt comfortable accepting Bob's offer. Richard drove down from Long Island the day before, and since he is a 'Guzzisti', we saddled up the 850T3, and for contrast, the CX500. Two bikes with the same transverse V-twin engine configuration could hardly be more different. The Guzzi is torque-y and primitive compared to the Honda with its 4-valve heads, electronically controlled ignition system, and 5-digit red line.



On day one we managed to stop at Johanna Furnace, where we explored an old restored lumber mill that was part of an industrial village from the late 1700's.





The ride up was lovely: back roads winding through mountainous PA coal country. With numerous breaks, in about 5 hours we reached Williamsport, where we encountered a long line of traffic. People from all over the world had flooded the town for the Little League World Series, lending the place an international party atmosphere. We cooled off at the Crippled Bear restaurant and contacted Bob Logue who lives about 20 miles north of town, somewhat in the woods.

Mr. Logue could not have been more generous or accommodating. He spent several hours showing Richard and I all manner of fantastic vintage machinery. Rare trials bikes featured prominently. His collection expanded to an overhead mezzanine, accessed by an ingenious elevator that Bob put together from an old fork lift. Another out-building housed a dozen or more street bikes, including one or two one-offs. A third area was used for storage of assorted farm and construction equipment. It was really a treat, but the highlight of the tour for me was learning about Bob's father, who was a very successful businessman, farmer, contractor, inventor, and pilot. Bob's obvious love and admiration for his father was contagious, and his willingness to open up and share tidbits of his dad's fascinating life touched Richard and me, and was very much appreciated. This then, was the ultimate destination in Williamsport, especially as it may never be duplicated. Truly special.

There was lots more riding ahead, and this was just day one. I had made arrangements to stay overnight at a motorcycle friendly campground on the shores of the Susquehanna: Steel Steeds. Our route would take us from Williamsport over the high escarpment that runs along the river just south of the city. We used 10 miles of dirt roads, including some serious wash outs and hairpin turns to surmount it, passing through peaceful Amish farm country along the way.





On the south side, we picked up one of those disused roads that has been replaced by a new highway, leaving the original, characterful roadway free of traffic. We crisscrossed the new highway a half-dozen times before re-crossing the river, following it south to our clapped out camper trailer. I guess we were 'roughing it' a bit. Just as we arrived the skies opened, and it began to pour, so we were very grateful for the tin roof over our heads even if the floor sagged a bit beneath our feet.

Not wanting to ride to dinner in the rain, we tried the sleazy 'biker bar' right next to the campground, but it was getting late. When the cook, who was

absorbed in drinking at the bar, was asked if she would prepare some food for us, she replied "Sure, but first I gotta clean the toilets". This response did very little to stimulate our appetites; we ordered a pizza delivery and had a drink (or three) ourselves. The pizza was decent, and we slept well after a very long day. There would be more to come on day two.

From Steel Steeds, early Sunday morning, we make our way to route 235, one of my faves. It snakes up and down three mountains. On the way, we stop for a great breakfast at a little country diner and meet three gentlemen who are touring on their Whizzers. I'll bet they get to see a lot of scenery that gets missed at higher speeds. Under perfect weather, we find our way to the Millersburg Ferry which takes us across the shallows at a very relaxed pace. We ride through bucolic Powell Valley, then pick up Gold Mine Road in Tower City. This shoots us up and over the Eastern Continental Divide and we make the final dash to Kennett Square for dinner. On these transverse V-twins we have captured the essence of long distance touring on antique motorcycles.

