

RIDE REPORT: BILL'S OLD BIKE BARN, MAY 2018



Earlier in the week, the forecast had called for heavy rain Friday with some clearing by Saturday. But by the time Friday arrived, things had changed. Now it seemed certain that it would pour all day Saturday. I was half expecting Ed (on the left) and/or Chuck to call and cancel, but they are both hard core enthusiasts and showed up right on time. Ed arrived for breakfast early Saturday, and Chuck showed up Thursday evening to spend the night. And rain it did. We covered ourselves with rain gear, loaded up on optimism, and departed on schedule, heading north, hopefully away from the weather. We crested the Eastern Continental Divide several hours and 100 miles later, popped out of pea soup fog, and stopped for gas and lunch, thrilled that the rain was finally letting up. The roads would continue drying throughout the rest of the day and while the rain gear never found its way back into our tank bags, we were able to enjoy.

After lunch we meandered through Ashland and Centralia before a final pleasant jaunt on 339. Tired, we located out cabin in the quiet campground and began to settle, calling for an Italian feast to be delivered. It was delivered, delicious and devoured quickly at the picnic table. Today's ride wasn't all that bad. Our gear held up surprisingly well and it was not too cold. Chuck commented that riding in the rain demands extra focus, which produces a Zen-like state of timelessness. Still, the sun is good.

We slept well despite the snores.



@ lunch: Ed above, Chuck right



Lost Lake or Lost Riders? Cabin's close.



A peaceful evening at the cabin capped a bit of a slog through the rain. The bikes ran well. We learned that Harleys and Gold Wings make poor dirt bikes and that Moto Guzzis hate mud. The forecast for Sunday was quite favorable, and we looked forward to a dry ride. At left, Chuck repairs his torn over boots with duct tape. Ed, at right, put his not-actually-quite waterproof boots to the test.



We did not require rain gear on Sunday. We first treated ourselves to a hearty breakfast at the local Sunday morning breakfast/brunch spot, then rode a 25 miles loop which took us to this exceptional covered bridge, a twin': two bridges in tandem. From here we descended to Bill's Old Bike Barn. I had called the night before to remind Bill and Judy, who live within their collection, that we would be banging on the door before official opening time. Once inside, we virtually had the place to ourselves and we spent a good hour exploring what can best be described as a collection of collections, and while the collection of motorcycles is the largest of them all, there is *something* for everyone to gawk at. The scope is astounding.

We had been switching bikes enough so that everyone had settled on a favorite. Ed preferred the V50, enjoyed the XLCR which reminded him of his Buell, and was surprised by the Gold Wing, which we cajoled him into trying. Chuck loved the XLCR, found the V50 to be interesting but underpowered for his size, and was happy enough to ride the Gold Wing after enduring the Harley for a number of miles. My favorite, as always, is the one I'm riding at the moment. We each left Bill's on our favorite.

A scenic cruise to Shamokin gave us access to Route 125, which winds up and down three mountains. At its southern terminus we stop in Ravine for lunch. Finally, we make that last 75 miles through Amish country, weaving around handsome horse drawn carts bringing families home from Sunday meeting. Dinner is waiting, and we sit outside in gorgeous weather, eating our fill and thinking about what has been accomplished. Overall, a great weekend to be on the road, RETROTOURS STYLE.

