

HUB & SPOKE TWO DAY TOUR

The 'hub-and-spoke' concept consists of 2 one day tours: the 'spokes' with and overnight stay here: the 'hub'. Five riders, mostly relatively local, signed on to test this new format, including:

Rich Anderson..... Long island ,NY

Ed Richmond..... Allentown, PA

Fred Shuffelbarger..... Landenberg, PA

Tri 'Tim' Tran..... Philadelphia, PA

One rider: Don Alexander from New Jersey, got sick and had to cancel.

So, with me, we were a group of five, and everyone had been here before, some dozens of times.

I LIKE REPEAT CUSTOMERS! I think I went a little overboard and prepared something like 15 or 16 bikes, thinking riders could have a choice. Riders were given their choice in the order in which they arrived. Richard from Long Island, a good 5 hour drive, arrived the night before and slept over. The rest arrived in time for breakfast on Saturday.

DAY ONE:

1973 Norton Commando Fastback

1976 Honda CB500T

1975Ducati 860GT

1976 Yamaha RD400

1976 Moto Guzzi 850T3

Under clear skies, on a pleasant, warm day, we loaded up and headed out after everyone became acquainted over an early breakfast. We took immediately to single lane roads, skirting the west side of Kennett Square and taking a meandering north and westward route.

Crossing the Mercers Mill covered bridge, we find ourselves passing Amish farms which are identified by the lack of power lines and the abundance of colorful laundry hung out to dry. Nearing Strasburg, we stop on Route 896 at Green Tree Hardware. On Saturday mornings, many Amish folk stop here for supplies. There are horse drawn buggies lined up in the parking lot.

Amish people are generally reluctant to have their pictures taken, but no one minds pictures of horses, and handsome animals they are. As a bonus, I have never seen one spook at the sound of an approaching motorcycle, though I never assume that to be the case.



Continuing through the lush countryside, we meander through Smoketown and cross the Conestoga River. Picking up Route 897 in Kleinfeltersville, we find our way to the Golden Age Air Museum. The grass airstrip is situated next to the



Eastern Continental Divide: an imposing ridge stretching to the horizon. We park up under a shady tree and check out the tiny museum, and large workshop, where antique airplanes are being pieced back together and made ready to take to the skies again. Richard generously decides to treat me to a test flight in one such restored machine. It is a thrill I will not soon forget. *Thanks Richard!* We are required to wear ridiculous leather helmets, which may not give much head protection, but at least help to keep my glasses from flying off my face. Back on the ground, hunger is setting in, and we soon find a nearby, well airconditioned Italian restaurant for lunch.

The next stop will be Oley, PA, where the Triumph Come Home Rally is winding down. Still, we get to see some super cool old bikes and are even lucky enough to watch the “chopstick motorcycle artist” at work.

Makoto Endo is simply a phenomenon. This 3 minute You Tube will explain better than I ever could: <https://www.cycleworld.com/story/motorcycle-videos/using-chopstick-to-paint-cycle-world-print-cover/> . From Oley we ride more tiny roads paralleling Route 100, heading south past Ludwigs Corner, then following the Brandywine River back to our ‘hub’ in Kennett Square for a home cooked meal par excellence. It has been a glorious day, and we have all had the opportunity to sample each of the 5 bikes. Tomorrow, we do it all again, but on 5 different bikes and a fresh destination.



DAY TWO:

1978 BMW R100/7

1977 Yamaha XS750

1984 Moto Guzzi V65

1975 Suzuki T500

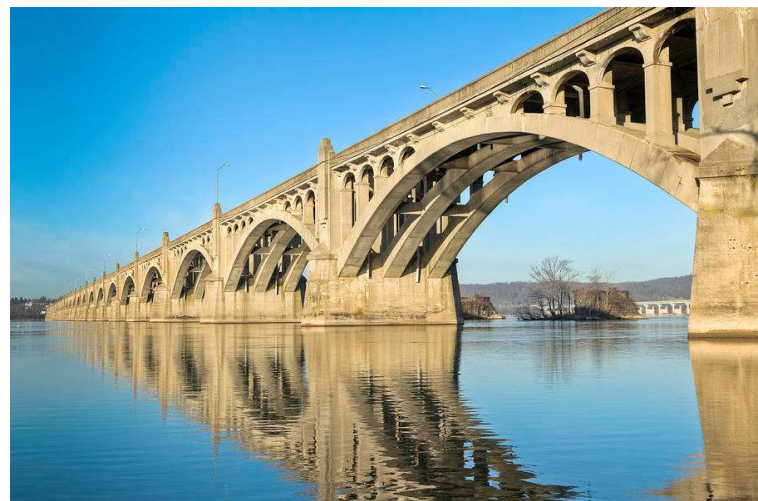
1977 Harley Davidson XLCR1000 Café Racer





The weather is still great, if on the hot side. What a motley assortment of bikes (and riders). We ride 30 miles and stop at the Pine Grove Covered Bridge. This beauty is exceptionally long and well preserved. Amish wagons pass through regularly. The view of the waterfall seen beneath the bridge is particularly fetching; I never grow tired of looking at it. Onward we ride on curvy 2 lane roads through 'Peach Bottom' farm country until we pick up River Road at the Holtwood Dam. Turning north, we follow the east bank of the Susquehanna River, detouring slightly west for another stop at The Pinnacles. Taking in the view, we watch as eagles soar above this deep cut in the river bottom. Time to switch bikes?

River Road is very lightly travelled, and we wind our way north to Columbia, PA, then across the Wrightsville Bridge. This fourth or fifth version of the mile long span is constructed of 26 pre-formed concrete arches.



The roadway is a wide boulevard festooned with art deco concrete rails and lamp posts. Originally built of wood, it was the longest covered bridge in the world, and played a significant role in the Civil War when Union troops burnt it down to prevent the Confederate Army from crossing in an attempt to capture Harrisburg, the state capital. In Wrightsville, we stop for a gourmet lunch at a riverside restaurant in a repurposed silk mill with a perfect view of the bridge.

We eat plenty, but there is still room for dessert, after a gas stop and a short ride to the Haines

Shoe House. It's one of those quirky tourist attractions that was originally built on Old Route 30: The Lincoln Highway. Ice cream is nice on a hot day, and the historic house and the story of Mahlon Haines are fascinating. From the Shoe House, we follow The Lincoln Highway briefly, then get out of the traffic to meander a bit on the way back to Wrightsville, where we turn south, following the west bank this time.

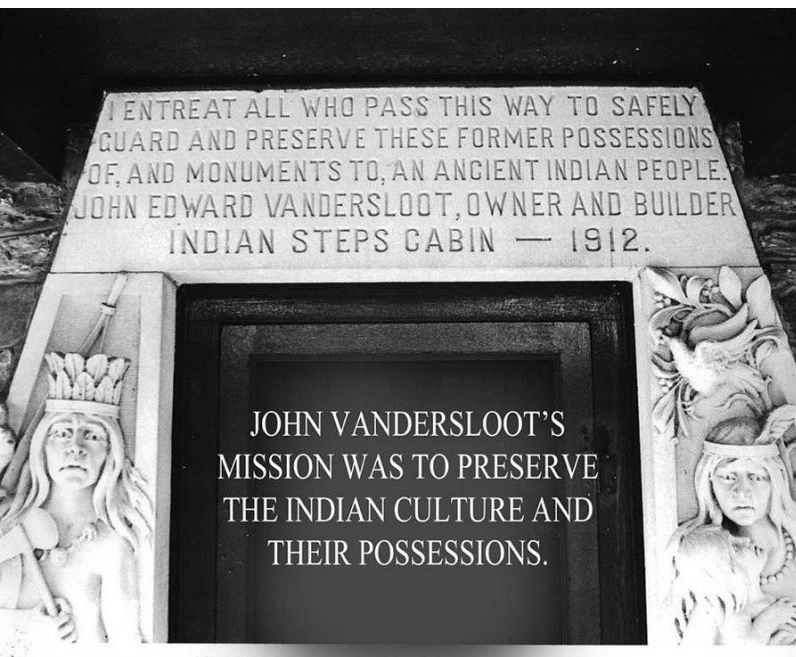
There are plenty of sharp curves to negotiate, and I am feeling the joy of riding with these guys. Next stop is the Indian Steps Museum, where I have yet to see another tourist. This museum was originally built as a hunting lodge type getaway by a wealthy Dutch man with an interest in Native American

Culture. Inside are hundreds of interesting artifacts which help to preserve that culture.

Next we follow the river past the Peach Bottom nuclear power plant, crossing the Susquehanna over the Conowingo Dam. Crossing into Maryland, we cruise through Rising Sun, then pick up the straight as an arrow Route 273 to Fair Hill, then back into PA at Lewisville to reach Route 841, a delightful road that takes us back home.

Lynn, as usual, has a mouth-watering meal waiting for us, complete with cold adult beverages. The Spoke and Hub Tour concludes with dinner and camaraderie. Everyone has had a spin on 10 very different vintage bikes. Just as important, we have eaten well, seen the sights, and bonded together.

Life is good!





Thanks to Tri (Tim) Tran for taking most of the pictures.