

RETROTOURS RIDE REPORT: "The New Local Loops" 05-20-23

Why "The New"? Local Loops had not changed much in years so I researched some new way points and tied them together with interesting looking back roads. Variety, it is said, is the spice of life.

This tour was well and truly booked, with 10 riders, one passenger, and me. I drove the 1977 BMW/EML sidecar rig and started off carrying Kathryn who had thoughtfully arranged this tour for her dad's birthday.

*Ed R.....Allentown, PA	*Mathias S..... Harleysville, PA
*Fred S..... Landenburg, PA	Robert D..... Chester Springs, PA
*Tim M..... Westminster, MA	*Jack W..... Coatesville, PA
Kathryn E..... Chadds Ford, PA	*Ed W..... Avondale, PA
Kenneth E..... Chadds Ford, PA	Richard H..... Wayne, PA
*Jon I..... Lincoln University, PA	*Joel S..... Kennett Square, PA

It is unusual that nearly all of the participants were local. With the exception of Ed, who drove down from Allentown and Tim, who came in from Massachusetts the day before and stayed here overnight, everyone else lives within 20 miles and they all arrived punctually at 8:15 for a decent breakfast spread, organized by my wife, Lynn.

Riders were asked in advance if there was a bike or two that they were interested in riding. These are the bikes that were prepared, and riders chose which bike to start out on as they arrived: first come, first served. Then at each stop, riders negotiated with one another to try to get time on as many different bikes as possible. At the last stop in the Kennett High parking lot, several riders did a few laps on the sidecar rig to see what that feels like.

1979 Moto Morini 500 Strada; 27,511	1978 Honda CX500; 37,354
1970 Triumph T100C; 28,611	1971 BSA 650 Lightning; 27,455
1979 Moto Guzzi V50; 32,012	1977 Yamaha XS650; 45,659
1976 Yamaha RD400; 42,843	1975 Suzuki T500; 23,835
1978 BMW R100/7; 30,154	1973 Kawasaki KZ750; 40,458

I rode the 1977 R100S/RS/EML sidecar rig with water and snacks in the trunk. I started out carrying Kathryn in the chair, but she switched to pillion with her father at the first stop. In all, we covered 150 miles +/- . Lunch was at a local taqueria, dinner was a gourmet meal prepared by Lynn.

Nobody fell over, nothing big broke, the weather was misty at times but mostly fine, the roads sublime.

**These riders are repeat offenders: they had been on a RetroTour previous to this one.*



After breakfast, the riders meet their first bike. A quick tutorial on control layout and riding quirks and characteristics is given. When riders switch bikes later in the day, they will need to update one another.



RIGHT: First stop is an unscheduled one at Smiths Bridge. A few riders have missed the turn but will soon catch up. This scenic covered bridge spans the Brandywine River very near the PA/DE state line, AKA The Mason Dixon Line.

This area is known as the Brandywine Valley, and it is lush and green at this time of the year.

BELOW: Parked up at Brandywine Creek State Park hawk watch area. People are still getting to know one another. A few riders switch to another bike. We have narrowly avoided a rain shower.





The second stop is at Peacedale Preserve. The damp weather is behind us now.

At the third stop it's time for a 'cuppa' at Rere's Café: a tiny drive through—walk through for us—nestled in a junction near Amish country. We watch several horse drawn buggies pass by.





Our stomachs are telling us it's time for lunch. Fourth stop is back in Kennett Square at Taqueria El Pena.

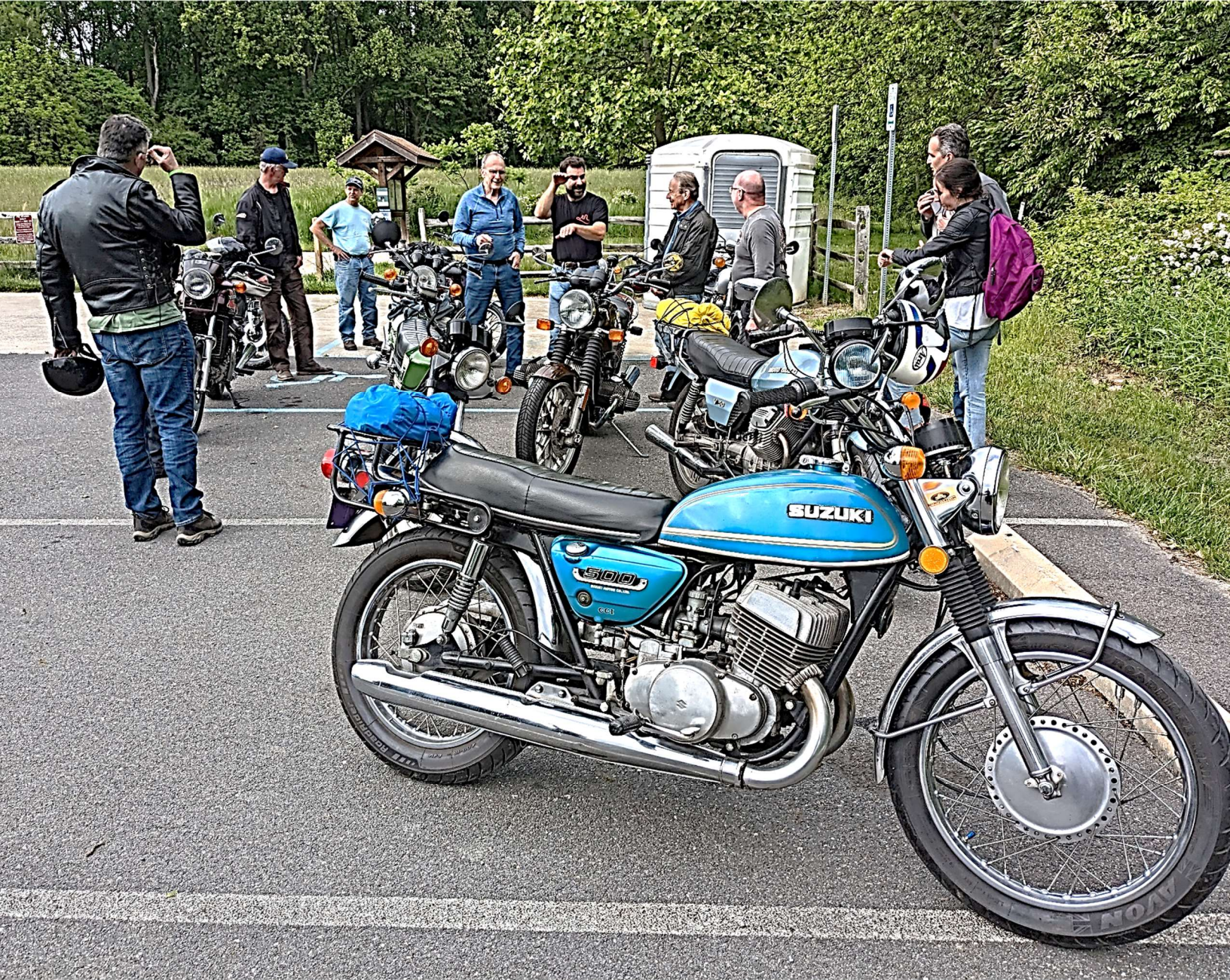
On the way to lunch we encounter a bridge that is blocked off. The tiny town of Modena is having its annual duck races. Rubber ducks are lined up and the bridge is covered with vendors. I try to bribe the authorities to allow us to walk our bikes across, but they won't budge. We choose an alternate route, get a bit mixed up, then lose a few riders. Backtracking, we locate the lost souls. The KZ750 has a broken clutch cable!



Fortunately, I have spare cables stashed on all the bikes. We team up and replace the cable in about 15 minutes.



After lunch it's south again to White Clay creek State Park which straddles the PA/DE state line. Stop #5.



The last stop before dinner is at the Kennett High parking lot. Here, riders can do a 4 mile self-guided loop to sample any bikes they may have missed. Several riders opt to try out the sidecar rig—in the parking lot of course.



Lynn has us covered for dinner + adult beverages.

Folks hang around to socialize for a while, then it's back to the real world. A great day all in all.

