

Hub & Spoke Tour 2025



So far this year, our luck with the weather has been amazing. We hardly rode in the rain at all, but that all ended this weekend. There was a nor'easter brewing off the coast and the forecast was for rain both Saturday and Sunday. Still, Joshua had flown all the way in from Colorado and Ed drove all the way down from Allentown. I picked Joshua up at the airport Friday; he was staying over Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Chris, from the west side of Philadelphia, came in late Friday and he was staying over for two nights. Chris and Joshua are in their 30s I suppose, both employed in information/computer related jobs and both fairly new riders; they both did really well in tough conditions.

Local yokels Mike (riding his own Suzuki GS550E) and Greg joined us for breakfast at 8:30 and we set out at 9:30. When we walked out to the bikes the seats were already wet, but it wasn't raining so we dried off the seats and headed south on route 82 under foreboding skies. A short way into Delaware, it started to rain in earnest. We pulled over to put on our rain gear— some of us already had it on—and soldiered on. The rain came in waves as nor'easters are want to do, so alternated between fairly heavy rain and no rain. Personally, I stayed dry with all my rain gear on but some of the other guys weren't quite as lucky. We explored Fort DuPont which was interesting and then crossed the canal into (slower) lower Delaware. After a short break at Augustine Beach we attacked route nine. There were road closed signs at several junctures, in preparation I suppose for the inevitable flooding of the low spots that would happen sometime over the weekend. We ignored the road closed signs and just kept heading south on nine without really encountering any standing water on the road. We had planned to stop next at the Dover Air Force Base Air Transport Museum, which sadly was locked & shuttered with a big sign "closed due to government shut down".

Still, the little Magnolia Diner was appealing. We took the place over and spread our gear out over four booths, had a great lunch & stayed for pie. Mike became the group meteorologist: studying his phone, analyzing the radar images and announced that we would be riding in the dry for the rest of the day. He was almost right. We drove west for about 15 or 20 miles reaching the Maryland border then turned north, crisscrossing into Delaware at least a half dozen times till we picked up route 15 which took us the rest of the way north. We stopped at Powersports East in Bear Delaware for a few minutes. Finally, on route 141, the sky opened up again. I had already taken off my rain gear, but I didn't care: we were close enough to home. Route 141 involves a 4 mile run of highway then rolls back down to surface road where I looked at my mirrors and saw only one headlight. I pulled over and said to Ed, "Where are the rest of them? " I don't know", he said, " they just dropped off". I said "wait here" and doubled back, did a couple U-turns , and saw them all in the breakdown lane. I came upon the 4 missing bikes in the breakdown land in the pouring rain and the bike that belonged to Mike was the reason everybody was stopped.

He said: " I can't get the bike to go. It starts, but it won't go. When I try to go it just dies". I said (OK, so maybe I screamed): "Mike, switch to Prime and let's get out of here". I realized that he had simply run out of main tank gas, but by the time he selected Reserve the carbs were dry. With the Suzuki's vacuum petcock, it would take a lot of cranking to refill the carburetor float bowls. Anyway, switching to prime got him going and we hightailed it out of there, picked up Ed, and made it home after topping up the gas tanks. Lynn had prepared Indian food, which was

delicious and we ate our fill. We were all pretty much wiped out and retired for the evening. Tomorrow, day two, would see Ed, who had signed up for Saturday only, return home. Chris, perhaps amazed that he survived the arduous day one conditions, decided to head home as well, saving himself for a future RetroTour. They were replaced by Nico and Fred, who had signed up for Sunday only.



It's just past sunrise on Monday morning. I've just returned from the airport delivering Joshua to his early morning flight back to Colorado. I have to say our luck with the weather has returned. Yesterday's Day-Two ride was fabulous. It didn't rain even though right now, it's still raining; the nor'easter keeps rotating off the coast, throwing bouts of rain at us, but somehow, despite yesterday's dire forecast, we rode all day long with no rain and headed up to Reading, PA to the Pagoda; a nice ride up. People started swapping bikes as they got more comfortable, trying different bikes. Everybody loved the Norton as always, and the Pagoda still looks resplendent, even beneath the scaffolding as its restoration continues. Hopefully, they'll be done with that soon and we can once again go inside to appreciate it more fully. Even so, the view from Mount Penn was amazing. The overcast sky had a high ceiling, so we were able to get the full panorama, and on the way back we stopped at Johanna Furnace, which was in the middle of an Autumn Festival.

Back at the house the fire was lit, and Lynn's famous pistachio encrusted salmon was served for dinner. For lunch we had stopped at Trooper Thorn's Irish Pub for fish and chips and shepherd pie; enormous, so we weren't really that hungry for dinner but Lynn's culinary skills tempted us to eat anyway (as usual). I think we all walked away from the weekend's RetroTour with a couple of extra pounds under our belt. We'll have to work on that. Everybody rode really well. The bikes

performed flawlessly.

Really, I didn't do any maintenance over the two days we rode a total of 10 different bikes, and it was especially heartening to have a couple of young adults along. It's great to see younger people taking interest in vintage bikes.

