

LESS IS MORE!

August 17,18,19,20, 2012



Jonathan Lee, Boyd Smith, Richard Bellot
Sam Smith, Peter Smith



Sitting here now, in between a hurricane and a nor'easter, mid-August seems like a dream. Boyd had been on my mailing list for some time and had finally decided to go ahead and do a RetroTour. Since he lives in Portland, Oregon this required planning and real commitment: advance airline reservations for him and his two sons. Booking well in advance yielded the best airfares and left plenty of time to fret over the details. I learned that the Smiths do adventure vacations together on a regular basis. They were not the first to do a father-son(s) RetroTour and I can't think of a better way to spend quality time with family. Can you?

I picked them up at the airport and did my best to make them feel at home here the night before our departure. This gave us a chance to get to know each other, check out the bikes, and get oriented to the time zone and RetroTours procedures. As usual Lynn impressed us with her culinary skills, serving up an excellent dinner followed by a huge breakfast buffet.



The two local riders, Jon and Richard, showed up early on Friday morning. They had stopped by earlier in the week to complete paperwork and load their bikes. We would be riding out on the R90/6, the Norton, the Ducati 860, the RD400, the Moto Morini, and the KZ750. The group came together for the first time and began to bond over breakfast. The weather looked promising: a bit wet at first but then clearing and sunshine.

Our route would take us north. The theme: "Less is More" was chosen as a reminder. This ride would have reasonable daily mileages and moderate speeds. Some riders enjoy 300 or 350+ miles per day at breakneck speeds on

highly technical roads, with nothing going on except ride, ride, ride. RetroTours offers rides like that but this ride is in a different category: the goal is 150 miles per day, maximum 175. I believe we stayed within those limits. Also, we had motel reservations for the first night only, after which we cast our fate to the wind. Bill's Old Bike Barn up by Bloomsburg was our first destination.

Thinking back, I remember that the clouds turned into serious rain just as we arrived at Bloomsburg, about 150 miles from home. We had reservations at a motel close to Bill's Old Bike Barn which put us into smoking rooms: that was all they had available.



None of us were committed smokers so we were a little annoyed that the rooms reeked of tobacco. My cloths smelled like cigarettes for days after. But we survived, rain, tobacco smell and all. The restaurant attached to the motel was decent enough and we had dinner and

breakfast right there. The Old Bike Barn never fails to impress and we spent several hours looking at all manner of old bikes and associated oddities.

We dried our rain soaked gear at the motel laundry and headed north on Friday morning. We cruised through some state forest lands and picked up PA Route 6, one of the most scenic roads in the country, according to National Geographic. We were meandering, no set route and in the end we turned north until Athens, just a few miles from the NY state line, then south, following cliffs along the Susquehanna River, finally stopping for the night at Towanda. We feasted on Mexican food right next to our motel and the portion sizes were downright scary! Still, we pretty near ate everything.

On Saturday we continued south, exploring the Endless Mountains and taking in a coal mine tour. We also visited Centralia: a ghost town that sits atop a coal vein which has been burning since the 60's. We stopped at a cave, but decided it was too touristy and expensive. We managed to find a cool remote picnic grounds within the state forest as well as a unique double covered bridge. Stops to explore these sites were unplanned: we just went wherever our impulses took us. A bit after sunset, we found our way to decent lodging in Frackville, PA. and walked to an Amish cuisine diner. Sunday brought lots of sunshine and a lovely cruise through Amish country. After a celebratory dinner meal at home we unpacked and got ready for Monday's airport run.

The riding was relaxed both in pace and daily duration, allowing us to stop and 'smell the roses' frequently. The roads and weather were excellent and the bikes ran quite well. It was interesting to see Sam and Peter adapt to kick starting big twins which they did quite well. Boyd has an old Triumph of his own back at home so he was no stranger to kick starting. Richard and Jon are RetroTours veterans; no surprises there. I loved some of the new spots we discovered, especially since they were unplanned and who knows if I'll ever get there again? The most enjoyable aspect for me was seeing how Boyd and his two sons got to relate and spend time together. Sam and Peter both seemed enthusiastic about old bikes even though they are only on life's first or second lap. They were very pleasant young men: real achievers and fun to spend time with. I think that a RetroTour is the *perfect* father/son adventure.



