

## RIDE REPORT: THE PINNACLES. JUNE 2-3 2018



DEBBIE AND KEN DAYTON DROVE UP FROM SOUTHERN MARYLAND, STAYED IN A LOCAL HOTEL, AND KNOCKED ON THE DOOR AT 8:45 ON SATURDAY MORNING. WE GOT TO KNOW EACH OTHER A LITTLE OVER BREAKFAST WITH LYNN AND ME. KEN IS A PILOT AND HE OWNS SEVERAL SIDECAR RIGS OF HIS OWN, AS WELL A BIG HARLEY. AFTER HIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE RUSSIAN DNEPER BRAND (TO BE POLITE, OF DUBIOUS QUALITY), HE WAS MORE THAN READY TO TRY THE BMW/EML RIG WITH HIS WIFE IN 'THE CHAIR'. I WOULD RIDE THE GUZZI 850T3.

THE FORECAST FOR THE WEEKEND COULD NOT HAVE BEEN WORSE, WITH PREDICTIONS OF TORRENTIAL RAINFALL BOTH DAYS. WE DOUBLE CHECKED OUR RAIN GEAR BUT DID NOT NEED TO PUT IT ON AS WE LEFT AT 10. DEBBIE EVEN OPTED TO LEAVE THE WRAP AROUND PERSPEX SHIELD AND RAG TOP OF THE SIDECAR HANGING ON THE GARAGE WALL. BRAVE LASS! IT WAS IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS THAT KEN KNEW HOW TO DRIVE A SIDECAR OUTFIT WELL AS WE MADE OUR WAY WEST, PAST MULTIPLE MUSHROOM GROWING HOUSES, REACHING THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER AT THE HOLTWOOD DAM AFTER 50 MILES, THEN FOLLOWING THE EAST BANK NORTH ALONG CURVATIOUS, RURAL, RIVER RD.

THE WEATHER WAS ACTUALLY NOT BAD. WE TOOK IN THE VIEW AT THAT PINNACLES STATE PARK, THEN CONTINUED ON TO COLUMBIA, WHERE THE MILE-LONG WRIGHTSVILLE BRIDGE TOOK US OVER TO THE WEST BANK AND LUNCH AT AN OLD SILK FACTORY CONVERTED TO A RESTAURANT.



NEXT STOP WAS FOR A QUICK TOUR AND DESSERT AT THE HAINES SHOE HOUSE, JUST A SHORT HOP AWAY. WE WERE STAYING AHEAD OF THE WEATHER, ONLY JUST. SOME VERY DARK CLOUDS LOOMED ON THE HORIZON AS WE LEFT: NOT THE BEST WEATHER FOR SMALL AIRCRAFT OR MOTORCYCLES. A ZIG-ZAG THROUGH FARM COUNTRY AND WE RE-CROSSED THE RIVER TO PICK UP A BACK ROAD THROUGH AMISH

COUNTRY LEADING TO LITITZ, WHERE WE TOOK A BREAK, EYEING THE NOW EVEN MORE MENACING CLOUD FORMATIONS. THE SKY WAS DARKENING; SO WAS THE MOOD, AS DEBBIE REALIZED THAT SHE HAD PUT HER SMALL, ASPHALT COLORED PURSE ON THE SIDECAR'S TRUNK LID WHILE SHE PUT ON HER HELMET BACK AT THE SHOE HOUSE, THEN FORGOT ABOUT IT. OF COURSE, IT SLID OFF SOMEWHERE OVER THE LAST 35 MILES.

HOPELESS OR NOT, WE DECIDED TO BACKTRACK AND SEARCH. A QUICK BLAST DOWN HIGHWAY 30 HAD US BACK AT THE SHOE HOUSE IN 30 MINUTES, BUT NOT WITHOUT OUR HAVING RUN THE GAUNTLET OF A BIBLICAL RAIN STORM WHICH THOROUGHLY SOAKED US UNTIL WE POPPED OUT THE OTHER SIDE INTO THE SUNSHINE TO DRY. DEB AND KEN WERE INTELLIGENT ENOUGH TO PUT ON THEIR RAIN GEAR, BUT I DECIDED TO ENDURE THE FULL BRUNT OF GOD'S POWERFUL DISPLAY. IT'S ONLY WATER...YOU GET WET, THEN YOU GET DRY. EXCEPT USUALLY FOR YOUR CROTCH WHICH STAYS WET FOREVER. OH WELL, THAT'S THE PRICE OF MY EXCESSIVE OPTIMISM: "I KNOW THIS IS JUST A BRIEF SHOWER...NOT EVEN WORTH PUTTING ON RAIN GEAR".

BACK AT THE SHOE HOUSE, THE WALLET WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND, SO WE BEGAN TO RE-TRACE OUR ROUTE. AS IT BEGAN TO DRIZZLE, I RELENTED TO REALITY AND PUT ON MY RAIN GEAR. I DOUBTED WE WOULD EVER FIND THE THING, ESPECIALLY IN THE GROWING DARKNESS, BUT AFTER 5 MILES, DEBBIE SPOTTED IT AND WE BASKED IN THE GLORY OF OUR GOOD FORTUNE, THEN SET OFF TO REGAIN THE ROUTE IN LITITZ. DID I SAY GOOD FORTUNE? IN THIS DIRECTION THE DOWNPOUR WAS SOMEHOW EVEN MORE INTENSE. CARS WERE PULLING OVER. SOME WERE STOPPING *WITHOUT* EVEN PULLING OVER. AT LEAST IT WAS SHORT LIVED, BUT AS WE CLOSED IN ON OUR B&B IN GAP, PA A NEW ANXIETY BEGAN TO GROW: RANGE ANXIETY. WE HAD COVERED 200 MILES WITH OUR DETOUR TO FIND THE WALLET AND HAD YET TO STOP FOR GAS. I WAS TRYING TO STAY AHEAD OF THE RAIN AND MAKE CHECK-IN BEFORE THE RESTAURANTS CLOSED AT 8. IT WAS CLOSE, AND I DID NOT WANT TO SPEND TIME STOPPING FOR GAS.



DID I MENTION THAT KEN IS A PILOT? A VERY DESIRABLE TRAIT FOR A PILOT IS TO NEVER, EVER, RUN OUT OF GAS. TO A PILOT, RESERVE IS TO BE KEPT IN RESERVE, AND NEVER USED EXCEPT FOR EMERGENCIES. KEN POLITELY POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS NOT *NECESSARY* TO BE 'ON RESERVE' BEFORE STOPPING FOR GAS. WHILE THIS IS CERTAINLY TRUE, IT WAS A REVELATION TO ME. I ALWAYS RUN INTO RESERVE, THEN LOOK FOR THE NEXT GAS, UNLESS I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESSERT OR SOMETHING. HERE, THERE WERE GAS STATIONS ON EVERY OTHER CORNER. THE BMW/EML HOLDS 8.4 GALLONS OF GAS AND THE GUZZI TAKES 5.5 GALLONS. I KNOW THE SIDECAR MACHINE CAN MAKE NEARLY 50 MILES ON RESERVE. NOT SO SURE ABOUT THE GUZZI, AND BY THE TIME BOTH BIKES WERE ON RESERVE WE WERE ALL GETTING A LITTLE NERVOUS, AND FOR SOME REASON, THERE WERE NO LONGER GAS STATIONS ABOUT. WE MADE IT TO OUR DESTINATION, ABOUT 15 MILES INTO RESERVE, AT 8:10 PM.

THE RESTAURANTS WERE CLOSED BUT WE WERE ABLE TO CALL IN A DELIVERY OF ITALIAN FOOD WHICH WORKED JUST FINE, THEN SETTLED IN FOR THE NIGHT. TURNS OUT WE COULD HAVE STOPPED FOR GAS. AS KEN SAYS, "THE ONLY TIME YOU CAN HAVE TOO MUCH

GAS ON BOARD IS WHEN YOU'RE ON FIRE." THE NEXT MORNING THE RAIN HAD STOPPED, AND IT WAS COOL WITH GUSTY WINDS. KEN NOTICED THE SIDECAR MACHINE'S TENDENCY TO BE STEERED BY THE WIND, AS WELL AS RUTS, BUMPS, CAMBER, AND SOMETIMES THE DRIVER. HE HANDLED IT WELL, ALONG WITH HIS RANGE ANXIETY, AS WE WERE 30 MILES INTO RESERVE BEFORE REACHING THE FIRST OPEN STATION. WE TOOK SOMETHING LIKE 14 GALLONS BETWEEN US. THAT WAS CLOSE.

THE ROAD TO EPHRATA TOOK US THROUGH THE TINY VILLAGE OF MARTINDALE. I STOPPED TO CHECK MY BEARINGS AND WE WERE IMMEDIATELY ENGULPHED BY SCORES OF AMISH FOLK HEADING FOR CHURCH ON BICYCLES, IN HORSE DRAWN BUGGIES AND ON FOOT. THERE WAS SO MUCH BUGGY TRAFFIC THAT WE FELT TRANSPORTED BACK TO AN EARLIER TIME. FOR ME IT WAS A SPECIAL MOMENT. IN EPHRATA, WE LOOKED AT MAYBE 100 BIKES, THE TURNOUT WAS VERY SMALL BECAUSE OF THE UNSETTLED WEATHER, ALTHOUGH ~~WE~~ HAD NO COMPLAINTS....IT WASN'T RAINING. EVEN WITH THE LIGHT ATTENDANCE, THERE WERE SEVERAL VERY INTERESTING MACHINES TO LOOK AT. AT ONE POINT, A RIDER ON A ZERO

ELECTRIC STREET BIKE CRUISED THROUGH THE HECTIC SCENE IN UTTER SILENCE, PERHAPS LOOKING DOWN HIS NOSE A BIT AT THE I.C.E. POWERED DINOSAURS SCATTERED ALL ABOUT. IT WAS SLIGHTLY EERIE.



ABOVE/LEFT: THE WIZARD OF OZ ARRIVED WITH A MUNCHKIN IN 'THE CHAIR'.

TOP/RIGHT: A MOTUS, ALWAYS WITH A CROWD AROUND IT.

RIGHT: A TRIBE OF INDIANS SET UP THEIR TEPEE.



AFTER BREAKFAST AND SOME CONVERSATION WITH OTHER RIDERS, WE HEADED EAST AGAIN, STOPPING FOR A WHILE AT HOPEWELL VILLAGE, WHERE WE EXPLORED AND STRETCHED BEFORE THE FINAL LEG, ARRIVING HOME TO A FANTASTIC HOT MEAL OF PAELLA, PREPARED BY MY WIFE LYNN. WE HAD COVERED A BIT MORE THAN 300 MILES IN TWO DAYS. THE WEATHER? WELL, IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE. WE FELT LUCKY, HAVING ENDURED ONLY THE TWO BRIEF SHOWERS. EVERYONE AGREED IT WAS WELL WORTH IT.



THIS PARK RANGER ENJOYED A SPIN IN THE RIG.