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The Tripper

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The Tripper Report for May - August 2005 (updated 6/12/2013)

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Delaware Valley, Bucks County & Environs May 1st to May 7th

Ride Director: Daniel Telep, Report by: Bob Mueller

Delaware Valley/Bucks County
May 01-07---Ride Director: Dan Telep
By Bob Mueller

The ride description for this journey into the Delaware River Valley and the surrounding countryside was accurate in all respects. Several of the participants, myself included, admitted to some initial skepticism when the ride director characterized the region as being 'one of the most picturesque bicycling areas in the world.' The fact that several of this year's participants had previously cycled some of the same routes on an earlier version of the same ride served as a testimonial as to how true this statement was as well as verification of how terrific the ride director does in orchestrating a truly pleasurable cycling tour.

The countryside demonstrated bountiful examples of immaculate farms, quaint villages, covered bridges, verdant forests awakening to spring and beautiful estate homes that could have been featured on the cover of Architectural Digest. A distinct common thread noticeable to someone who was not familiar with the area was the multiple examples of beautiful stone work that characterized many of the older homes and farms. There was some evidence of recent flooding that had besieged the area shortly before our arrival, but this had minimal impact in detracting from the overall beauty of the region.

We discovered several outstanding options for breakfast as well for dinner each day. The cities of New Hope, PA and Lambertville, NJ are cultivating a growing tourist industry and we benefited from this effort since the infrastructure was in place, but not burdened much at all since we were there pre-season and during the week. Apparently, this area of the Delaware River Valley is becoming an increasingly popular destination for folks who want to escape the big cities (Philadelphia and NY) for a weekend retreat and a step back in time to a simpler lifestyle. Dan informed us that the reason that the area has been 'off the radar screen' for so long is that it is just far enough away from some of the major transportation routes ensuring that it has remained relatively isolated.

In addition to enjoying the natural beauty of the area, we were able to tour educational sites such as Washington Crossing, PA (where General Washington and his men crossed an ice-choked river before marching on to Trenton and surprising the Hessians) and the Moravian Pottery & Tile Works in Doylestown, PA. One day we rode to the university town of Princeton, NJ. On some days, we rode a portion of our route on the canal path that paralleled the Delaware River. On another occasion, our fearless leader led us on a trapeze through the woods and across a rickety "bridge to allow us to rendezvous with some asphalt pavement after we had to detour because the majority weren't inclined to ford a river that had become an unexpected obstacle! (Remember what the "A stands for!) A special highlight of the trip was a lovely evening we shared with Dan in his beautiful home when he graciously hosted us to a scrumptious dinner and extended 'Happy Hour.'

A feature of the ride that I found to be especially appealing was the fact that this was a fixed base ride. We were able to cover a great deal of territory with virtually no duplication of the routes while we benefited from not having the hassle of packing and unpacking our personal belongings each day. Most of us stayed in local motels or hotels, although one participant stayed at a hostel that was not too far away. Unfortunately, a local campground that had been a camping option in prior years was not available this year due to flooding damage that it had incurred several weeks prior to our start date.

Participants: Barb Jarmoska, Richard Pfau, Daniel Telep, William Mishler, Ravi Gulati, Tom Brandt, David Jaffe, Pat Cooley, Bruce Lundrigan, Alma Worthington, David Dresner, David Allen, Bob Mueller, Bill Chadwick

Spring California Redwood, Coast & Wine Country May 15th to May 20th

Ride Director: Jo-ann Nicola, Report by: Louise Castelli

Ride Director: Jo-Ann Nicola, Assistant: Tom Traynor. Report by Louise and Virgil Castelli

This was a five day, fixed base ride headquartered at the Fern Grove Cottages, located in the historic town of Guerneville, California, Sonoma County. The fixed base ride was appreciated by the group of rides present since it rained for one and a half days. Staying in one location also allowed us to choose our own type of ride each day since Jo-Ann had given us ten different ride options. At the evening happy hour, Jo-Ann explained which ride she recommended for the next day, which was the ride she was doing, and we were welcome to join her. Each route had various options. Depending on one's riding ability, mood, or the weather, short, medium, or long routes, (30-78 miles), could be chosen, mountains, rolling hills, or even a flat ride could be chosen to the Armstrong Redwoods State Park. The park is a 700 acre old growth redwood preserve.

Each ride had beautiful scenery, especially the coastal rides to Goat Rock Beach and Bodega Bay. "Drop-dead gorgeous", Jo-Ann would say. Rides through the wine appellations of the Russian River Valley, Dry Creek Valley, and the Alexander Valley were lovely, causing one to wonder if they were in Italy, France, Wisconsin, Washington State or Oregon. The Kings Ridge and Hwy 1 route gave the intrepid riders 78 miles and 6260' of climbing. Most of the routes going east toward the coast gave the riders many opportunities for raising their heart rates!

All participants had one rest day as we had 3 inches of rain in 24 hours. There were plenty of picturesque towns, such as Healdsburg, Occidental and Duncan Mills, plus the wineries and Pacific Coast to amuse ourselves during our time off the bike.

The innkeepers at the Fern Grove cottages did a fantastic job of taking care of our needs. Our ride leader, Jo-Ann, had made arrangements with Margaret, the innkeeper, to serve wine and hors d'oeuvres for us each afternoon: varieties of cheeses, spreads, cold cuts, cucumber sandwiches, mini quiches, etc. Anyway, it was not beer and peanuts! Margaret was also a wine expert, particularly of the wines from that region. Wines from small local wineries were served each evening. Margaret also provided us with exceptional breakfasts each morning including many breads, scones, granola and other cereals. Restaurants were conveniently located in town or within a short driving distance of Guerneville. Many of us opted not to dine out for dinner because of the variety and quantity of appetizers consumed during the cocktail hour.

This was a beautiful area to ride in. We saw three commercial bicycle riding groups in the same area that week. Our group was very compatible, with friendships growing as the week progressed. (It was either the people or the wine.)

Participants: Daniel Telep, Patrick Smith, Rod Harmon, Carol Click, Jo-ann Nicola, Topper Hermanson, Jim Wiley, Mary Ann Otter, Paul Robbins, Michael Groover, Lettie Smith, Pat Highet, Virgil Castelli, Richard Peasley, Penny Roberts, Patrice Scully, William Tout, Marilyn Anderson, Sandy Kobrock, Ann Bauermeister, Tom Traynor, Lois DuBois, Mark Mueller, Louise Castelli, Rod Neathery

Yellowstone/Beartooth June 11th to June 21st

Ride Director: Donald Smith, Report by: Judy Dunlap



Ride Director: Don Smith Report by: Judy Dunlap

A cycling tour that includes Jackson Hole, the Grand Tetons, Old Faithful, Mammoth Hot Springs, Norris and West Thumb geyser basins, the Firehole, Snake, and Yellowstone Rivers, Jackson and Yellowstone Lakes, Shoshone National Forest, Chief Joseph and Beartooth Scenic Highways, Dead Indian and Beartooth Passes, and, of course, the wildlife that abounds in Wyoming and Montana. Sound like heaven? Indeed, it was.

Twenty cyclists and one indispensable van driver met Saturday, June 11, in Jackson, Wyoming, to prepare for nine days of bicycling through Wyoming and Montana. At a delicious dinner arranged by Norma and Royal Price at the Off Broadway Restaurant, some riders renewed old acquaintances, while others met for the first time, and leader Don

Smith gave us an overview of the trip.

When we left Jackson the next morning, it was raining, with temperatures in the forties and the Grand Tetons shrouded in fog. The rain continued for one more day, and then skies were mostly clear and temperatures moderate for the remainder of the tour. Daily mileage varied from 45 to 80 miles, with elevation gains from 1800 to 5700 feet.

Highlights and memories of the tour include:

Crossing the Continental Divide three times, twice in one day.

A mouse that took up overnight residence in Scot Cameron-Bell's suitcase at Colter Village.

All those cute little rodents (ground squirrels, pica?) standing at attention by their burrows, listening attentively to Don Smith during happy hour at Mammoth Hot Springs.

Don Martin's nearly up-close-and-personal encounter with a bear on the steep climb out of Mammoth Hot Springs the next morning.

The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone and the beautiful Hayden Valley.

A layover day at Lake Village. Some of us chose to ride, while others hiked Elephant Back trail. (And what a treat to find a string trio playing chamber music in the evenings, in the grand hotel there.)

Twenty miles (at least!) of a vicious headwind at the end of the run-in to Cody, on what was supposed to be an easy, mostly downhill, 80 miles.

A long, hot, 13-mile slog up Dead Indian Pass (aptly named, at least if the Indian was on a bike), followed by a marvelous 8-mile downhill run.

The final day's twenty-mile climb up to Beartooth Pass, with spectacular scenery along the way: a huge Alpine meadow, lakes still partially or mostly frozen, the road near the top lined with snowdrifts 10-12 feet tall, wind whipping across the pass, snow-capped mountains in the distance.

Bison by the score, elk by the dozens, mule deer, a moose, trumpeter swans, an osprey, a bald eagle, white pelicans.

The camaraderie during our daily happy hours.

Celebrating two birthdays: Judy Eisenberg's in Mammoth Hot Springs and Ann Barry's in Cooke City.

Many thanks to ride leader Don Smith for his meticulous planning and implementation, and to George Kerster for driving the SAG van. The two of them made this an exceptionally enjoyable BAC tour!

Participants: Kenneth Cameron-Bell, Scot Cameron-Bell, Alison Stone, George Kerster, Ann W Berry, Don Gieringer, Dusty Hamrick, Rod Harmon, Jackie Mastrangelo, Perry Pollock, Beany Wezelman, Herb Eisenberg, Judy Eisenberg, Ralph Singer, Don Martin, Peter Krichman, Judy Dunlap, Donald Smith, Marjorie Kirk, Ray Cosyn

Wine and Truffles of Northern Italy May 13th to May 25th

Ride Director: Jack Tiano, Report by: Liz Siaba

Wine and Truffles of Northern Italy May 13-25

Ride Director: Jack Tiano Report By: Liz Siaba

You would have never guessed this was the inaugural ride of the Wine and Truffles of Northern Italy. The Tianos put together a well organized bicycle tour which gave us the full flavor (no pun intended) of the Piedmont Area.

We started and ended the adventure in Torino, which will host the 2006 Winter Olympics, with a hotel situated right across the street from the train and bus station. Talk about the ultimate in convenience. We had a taste of what was to come the very first evening dining in a restaurant that specializes in the local cuisine and wines. After the sumptuous six course dinner, we looked forward to the next 12 days of riding and dining.

Jack and Judy exercised really good judgment on the routes leaving and returning to Torino. We took the train with our bikes out of Torino, population 1,000,000 would have definitely been a hassle and we all enjoyed the ease of this arrangement. We disembarked in Chivasso and began our cycling adventure to Terruggia. We rode 69 kilometers through the Monforte area that is famous for great Italian red wines. We passed through many quaint villages as we cycled the rolling hills filled with vineyards. We spent two nights in a family owned and operated hotel with all the amenities and something very dear to all cyclists, great food of the region.

We often stayed two nights at the family owned and operated hotels with beautiful loop rides. During the day, we would pass the agricultural areas that we would dine on that evening. The Terruggia loop ride took us past not only the vineyards and hazelnut trees, but also the Arborio rice fields. Who would have thought Italy would grow rice? But there we were in the middle of the rice paddies as they were flooding them.

Every days ride was touring cyclists' dream as we pedaled through green forests filled with hazelnut trees and fields lined with brightly colored red poppies and other spring flowers. On the loop days, riders had a choice of routes of different lengths, or sitting by the pool and enjoying the warm spring Italian sun.

It was obvious that Jack and Judy not only spent a great deal of time on developing bicycling routes of great beauty and varied terrain, they also sought out special small hotel with owner chefs that had the highest commitment to using local products to prepare special meals. We enjoyed a variety of appetizers della casa, fresh homemade pastes and gnocchi, main courses of fish, meat or poultry, and dolce della casa. What would a meal in Piedmont be without course appropriate wines? We could not insult the local culture. So we indulged in the Barolos, Barbarescos, Dolcettos, Moscatos and Proseccos, some of us with greater gusto than others.

We averaged forty miles of wonderful riding always followed by memorable meals and excellent local wines. Could it get any better than this?

Well, Judy and Jack found a way. One of our stops was at the Villa Carlo, a small country in owned and operated by the famous chef Carlo Zarri for two evenings. Carlo has been the food director for the Italian Olympic team for the last two Olympics and is one of the leading experts on food and wine of the Northern Italy. On the second day at his hotel, we participated in a cooking class where we made dinner under his able instruction and guidance.

-----Report Truncated

Participants: Hank Hermes, Jack Tiano, Judy Tiano, Nancy Follett, Tom Grant, Vicki Elmer, Cynthia Campbell, Richard Campbell, Carol Hermes, Foster Dieckhoff, Anita Rodarte, Liz Siaba, Dion Shea, Cathy Cloutier, Ronald Guidotti, Tom TeBockhorst, Murray Treloar, Margaret Treloar, Bill Thomson, Jean Behse, Peter Krichman, Don Martin

Scotland Coast-to-Coast August 28th to September 10th

Ride Coordinator: Jack Glaze, Report by: Martha Neville

Ride Coord. Jack Glaze Report by: Martha Neville

This was a great ride in the wilds of Scotland led by Jack Glaze and well supported by Wildcat Adventure Tours. Scotland is a country of rolling green hills with dark streams percolating through veiled woods, expansive carpets of amazingly purple heather, and a wealth of pride and history reflected by a vast array of castles and monuments throughout the land. And don't forget the sheep! Any pause along the routes was always punctuated by the bleating -and sometimes the presence- of sheep and the occasional highland cow. The weather is just as stormy as Scotland's history and tested us cyclists with wind and rain on a number of occasions!

We began on the east coast and rode our first day on the Isle of Skye –now connected to mainland Scotland by a bridge. All of us learned a new meaning for the word "undulating as John Fulton (Wildcat's owner who accompanied us on many rides) described the hills on Skye. One hill had a 22% grade! Fortunately, this was the exception. As we were to learn throughout the ride, Scotland has a lot of substantial hills. In fact, we rode within view of Ben Nevis, Scotland's highest mountain at feet. However, John and his team did an excellent job of starting with the easier and shorter rides before leading us into more challenging terrain. Our guides also rode with us as a group on several occasions which was most helpful in the larger and busier towns –especially riding on the left side of the roads! After Skye, we rode from Morar along the coast to Glen Finen and Bonnie Prince Charlie's monument and then on to Fort William. Incidentally, Prince Charlie's name comes from the Scottish pronunciation "Charlach which evolved into Charlie. Kingussie was approached by way of the Caledonian canal, the Commando monument (quite interesting, this Scottish elite fighting group from World War II is where the term "commando originated), and sweeping views of the Loch until a tea stop at Lagan where a friendly shopkeeper told us about local hero Andrew Carnegie. Accommodations along the route included B and B's in old and interesting houses –some of which were reputed to be haunted! We had some beautiful riding in the rolling hills past the Ruthven Barracks (where redcoats attempted to quell the highlanders). Much of our route also took us along old carriage ways bounded by ancient stone fences and local wildlife including nesting osprey at the Loch Garten Bird Reserve, kestrels, and Scottish red deer. Grantown-on-Spey provided Crawdor Castle, Fort George, Ballindaloch Castle and spectacular sweeps of purple heather and isolated hills in Cairngorm National Park. Moving on to Ballater, we had a serious climb over Lecht Pass. Perhaps even more challenging were the intense winds at the pass where some cyclists actually walked downhill to avoid being blown off the mountain! Now we were in whiskey country and had a fine tour and whiskey sampling at Glenlivet distillery. Nearby in Tomintoul (the second highest town in Scotland) there was an opportunity to try whiskey ice cream –quite smooth indeed! Now that John and his crew had us in reasonable shape, we were ready for some good climbs in the last days of the tour. We were rewarded with beautiful terrain. For our efforts. Another great food item to try was REAL mince pie filled with meat and potatoes. This was especially satisfying on a cool and rainy day! At the last, we had a wonderful final dinner together with many raucous good stories and John in his kilt and sporran. We ended with a ride to Montrose and the North Sea.

Participants: Julia Irwin, Carlene Green, Nancy Hurtado, James Whiles, Jack Glaze, Ken Neville, Martha Neville, Kenneth Cameron-Bell, Scot Cameron-Bell, Jackie Gordon, Jan Johnson, Donald Smith, Shirley Fritzler, Bob Fritzler, Joan P Slote, Fran Steel, Sharlene Lundal, Carol Means