

AKRON BMW

One fine Sunday

Sunday November 7, and the promise of an equally nice day as the Saturday just before. The prospect of maybe the last day in 2004 nice enough for a long, all-day ride.

This made us decide to really bundle up at 7:00 in the morning and ride a bike instead of taking the car to the BMW Club breakfast. Attendance was outstanding for that late in the year - I counted over 30 people. After a healthy dose of calories to get that inner furnace going, we, who had finished all the yard work the day before, congregated for the ride to Mt Vernon, to a "50-style diner". A ride from breakfast to lunch.

Nine bikes total, we followed Mike B. on his 1150RT who, as the proud owner of a new Garmin, had volunteered to lead the ride (and also had plotted the route before).

We took off from our location at Rte 224 and 91 and went a weird way to the Southern extension of Akron's Main Street, obviously as a proof of our leader's promise that we would not use any part of the freeway system. Later during the ride, this objective became more obvious as we found ourselves on several stretches of dirt and gravel road.

I had never thought, I would have a decent argument for wanting to own a BMW GS, but riding with these guys gives you one quickly.

Once on Main Street, we moved South out of town to 619, over to 93 to Canal Fulton.

If memory serves me right, we ended up on 241 in Mt Eaton and from there we explored the rural roads of Ohio's Amish Country, ever so often doing weird evasive maneuvers in the middle of a turn in order to get around that pile of fallout left behind by a horse-buggy. None of that could dampen the excitement to be on the road, though, on a beautiful day, riding tight formation with a bunch of grown-ups, who know how to ride and don't have to prove anything. Unlike some of the other guys who seemed to be out there and coming the other way, ducking behind fairings, clinging on clip-ons and hanging over the center line, just a little too close for comfort. Or for that redneck in the pick-up truck, drifting over the middle. The weather, if it turns that good that late in the year in Ohio, does funny things to people.

The first town I recognized - or could identify - after a while, was Nashville. We crossed Rte 39/60 on 514 and proceeded to Danville. Fortunately, a few in the group had not topped off their tank before we started and a pit-stop was made. I had eagerly awaited that, as my usual penchant for morning coffee,



which I had carelessly given into during breakfast was getting back to me and had made me rather uncomfortable in the saddle for the last 45 minutes or so.

Stretching the old legs a little and exchanging some war stories, all the while not forgetting to razz the ride leader for his unusual selection of roads, made for a pleasant break. It seemed like our little group at the station in the middle of town attracted some passers-by and soon the lot was almost packed with motorcycles. No too difficult, though, considering that three GL1800s pulled in at once, adding quite some presence to the assembly.

Well, we finally pulled out to cover the short leg remaining to our destination. We arrived in Mt. Vernon at around 12:30 p.m.. Totally relying on the lead rider and he totally relying on his Garmin proved to be one last challenge to finally make it to the diner, though. After going around and around blocks and stopping at the same light for the third time, I wondered when we, riding in the front, would finally pull up behind the rear end of our group. No surprise then, that we had to stop three times to give us all a chance to come together again. Still, we made it.



The eleven of us had to spread over three tables in the quaint place, and we had some good, old fashioned country lunch. How does “ham loaf” with mashed potatoes sound?



Except for our friend Robert, who could not resist the temptation of the place being “Velvet Ice Cream” franchise. He decided breakfast still was holding him over and he went right for dessert. One righteous “Banana Split” sure brightened up the table.

For the way home and with home being in different spots around Cleveland and Akrron, we separated into three different groups. One took the “fast” way back , which was Rte 13 to 97 to I-71 and I-76. Another group took Rte 36 to Rte 62 to Rte 30 and I-77.

We decided to pick the best compromise between scenic and quick and chose Rte 3 straight North to Wooster and from there to 585 Our friend Dick on his K100LT joined

us and left us when we turned off of 585 to Rte94. He proceeded to Rte 21 to take this back to Manchester.

We arrived home at almost exactly 4:00 p.m. and I must say, this has been a good day!

Mike Simon

Photos courtesy of Bill Ducar