



BMW MOA Charter 280

Mid-Atlantic Riders' Rag

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The Monthly Newsletter of the Mid-Atlantic Riders

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Wet [Sweaty] and Wild in West Virginia

Noel C. Burnham

Over the Fourth, an intrepid group made up of yours truly [the newbie], Larry Schmittinger, Bill Borda and Jan Chambers followed the ever ready and very speedy Jay Schmittinger to Wild West Virginia. Jay, having just finished dealing with the legislators in Dover, was ready to ventilate and lead the group from Wesley's westward through the "top" of Maryland. After shaking out the cobwebs on local roads, the troupe dropped down to the I-70 in hopes of a speedy journey to

Next Breakfast

Our next breakfast will be at Matilda's in Newark at 9 AM on Saturday, August 12.



Berkley Springs and air conditioning was a relief. In addition, a fine meal at Tari's Café refreshed the spirits. We highly recommend Tari's if you are in the neighborhood.

Day two started out as early as my eyeballs would open. A quick breakfast at the Best Western and then on to our next destination via

Berkley
Springs WV.
OOPS!!
Holiday
traffic made
the big slab a
parking lot.
Hopping off
to Rt. 40 the
journey
continued on
a much more
pleasant note.
Arriving in

the twisties. South on 522, west on 127/29, joining up with Route 50 through Romney and south on 220/28. Never a straight line on the map or on the road. We passed through the Seneca Rock area and paused at the Route 33 junction. Jan and Bill split off and headed east to Harrisonburg for their return trip home. The Three Musketeers continued on, lead by the indomitable Jay. Elkins, Cass followed by trails through the Monongahela National Forest lead over hill and down dale with plenty of twisties until we reached Marlinton for the second night's reprieve. Don't think I'd have lasted the whole way without Larry providing backup [literal as I was the middle rider] support for this trio. Early to bed and early to rise.



Day three was a twisties fiesta. From Marlinton we traveled west via Gauley Bridge area, Oak Hill, and then caught the I-64 for awhile. Past Beckley we dropped off the Interstate and headed to Hinton and the New River Gorge. Stopped for some views and then took up the twisties again. Headed east through Ronceverte, White Sulphur Springs, and crossed into Virginia. Passed through Hot Springs via 220 and went east on 39 and 42 to Staunton. Once again air conditioning did its trick along with a wonderful beef dinner at the Texas Steakhouse.

Day 4 (July 4th) saw more dew on the saddle as we headed east towards home. We took a side trip up part of the Skyline Drive to route 33 before cutting over to US 29 for breakfast and a pause before the final run to home. Jay and Larry headed east on I-66 through DC while I took the circle route on I-495. The new Woodrow Wilson Bridge makes traffic on the outer loop almost bearable. A quick shot east on Route 50, over a fog encased Annapolis Bay Bridge and up Route 301 brought me back to Middletown. Larry reports that the trip was nearly 1200 miles by his trip meter. A good time was had by all even though temperatures were mostly in the 90s.

(There are more trip photos than the two in the article, please contact Noel at nburnham@mmwr.com to see 'em – ed.)

My Most Excellent Vermont Adventure or My Experience at the 2006 BMW MOA Rally

Cole Mills

At June's *New Sweden BMW Riders'* (the South Jersey BMW club) meeting the topic of popular discussion over dinner was the *BMW MOA* "Vermont, It's Not Flat" International Rally from July 20th to 23rd. Unlike last year's Ohio rally, this was to be a rider's rally with outstanding roads.

When I worked at a New Hampshire law firm, Vermont was one of my playgrounds and I spent many a three-day weekend running the bike through the Green Mountains while I lived in Connecticut. Most importantly, I was married just outside the quaint town of Woodstock six years ago on the same weekend as the *BMW Motorcycle Owners of Vermont* holds its Green Mountain Rally. My first test as a newly married guy was trying to ignore a hundred BMW motorcycles zipping around and being surrounded by people wearing leather and Cordura as thoughts all things motorcycle danced through my mind, but I digress.

Leaving New Jersey

My buddy Chris Alberto and I mapped out a 471 mile route that took us from Cherry Hill, NJ to Burlington, VT while avoiding New Jersey and New York City commuter traffic. We met at 7:00 AM Wednesday morning at *DeSimone Motorcycles'* soon to be former Route 70 location. The goal was to hit our respective hotels by 5:00 PM. There is no pretty way to leave the Garden State, so timing was everything to move swiftly over the Turnpike and around New York City. The direct route out is comprised of I-295 North, New Jersey Turnpike to Fort Lee and the Palisades Parkway to I-287 across the Tappan Zee Bridge. Using the "High Occupancy Vehicle" or H.O.V. lane, we avoid the traffic around Newark (pronounced "Nuerk"), NJ. Unfortunately, traffic was stopped after we crossed the bridge. I spy the Saw Mill Parkway – North exit and we fight our way over to the exit. Surprisingly, this "car only" road had be recently paved and has little activity. Temperatures were in the mid-80s.



Cliff's Cycle Revolution, Danbury, CT

The first stop on our ride North was *Cliff's Cycle Revolution* in Danbury, Connecticut. *Cliff's* is a five year-old BMW, Ducati, MV Augusta dealership that is an investment banker's escape from his life on Wall Street. Having grown-up in Connecticut, I was looking forward to seeing the state's newest BMW dealer and see Francis (the parts guy) and Phil Cheney (master airhead mechanic) who used to service my bike when *Lindner's BMW* in New Canaan, CT existed. The shop is worth a visit if you are in the neighborhood or riding up to *Marcus Dairy* on a Saturday. Chris and I looked around and, then, purchased our obligatory T-shirts.

Danbury, CT to Massachusetts Border

We left *Cliff's* at 11:00 AM for lunch at the *American Pie Bakery* in Sherman, CT at the intersection of Routes 39 and 37. Once outside the Danbury City limits, Route 39 is a winding scenic road North past the Candlewood Lake and several state parks.

We stop for lunch at this cute little bakery where breakfast is served all day. The weather is perfect, so we grab a spot outside. Chris order's Banana Foster-style French toast and I order some of the best (fresh, not canned) corn beef hash and eggs. Service is fast. We eat quickly. Then, continue riding North to US 7, West on Route 4 and North on Route 41. This route took us through quaint little Connecticut towns where wealthy New York City dwellers escape to every weekend to hang out with other Manhattanites. Thankfully, it was Wednesday and the New Yorkers are still stuck on the island.

Massachusetts Border to Vermont Border

Continuing on Route 41 into Massachusetts, we avoided Pittsfield by picking up US 20 and Route 22 in New York State, then back on US 7. Traffic was exceptionally light and before we knew it, signs welcomed us to Vermont.

Vermont Border to Burlington

Fearing that US 7 would be heavily traveled, I consulted several motorcycles guides (*Moto Maps* and Marty Berke's *Motorcycle Journeys Through New England 3rd Edition*) to continue our scenic ride into Burlington on historic Route 7A to Route 30. In Middlebury, we started experience rush hour traffic. Who would expect that our only traffic on the entire ride would be in a state with a population of less than four million people. We arrived to are respective hotels by 5:30 PM. Total trip about 475 miles and ten and a half hours.

Needless to say, I had an incredible night's sleep at the two-star rated *Day's Inn*.¹

Thursday, Rally Opening Day

To be one of the first attendees to check out the vendors, I got up at 8:00 AM, skipped the complimentary breakfast of undercooked waffles and watery coffee offered by the motel, and rode over to the fair grounds. The space outside the registration area was packed with bikes (most loaded with camping gear) and the registration lines were well over a hundred deep. Several rally volunteers in golf carts rode around offering water and coffee to the eager rally attendees. Thankfully, the registration volunteers were fast and efficient. Both the pre-registered and unregistered lines moved quickly. The rally

¹ Many rally goers elected to stay at dorm rooms and townhouses at *St. Michael's College* because of the attractive nightly rates and to have a dry place to sleep and shower. Unfortunately, none of these rooms had air-conditioners. This resulted in a tri-county run on personal fans.

volunteer greeted me like a long lost friend as he gave me my rally packet, raffle tickets and green plastic beer mug.

Like most attendees, my first stop was to grab my rally pin and patch and to drop my raffle tickets into the “ballot” boxes to not miss the first door prize drawing at 1:00 PM. After buying the obligatory “Vermont, It’s Not Flat” T-shirt, it was time to explore the huge exhibition hall. There were two large, air-conditioned vendor areas which was a great escape from the 90 degree plus temperatures. The regulars like *Bob’s BMW*, *Cycle Gadgets*, *Mix-it*, *Roadgear* and *Helen 2 Wheels* were set up selling their products at a fast and furious pace. In addition, there was one vendor selling “air bag” vests that inflate when a rider is forcefully ejected from a bike. The vest automatically inflates when the tether receives a tug greater than 40 pounds. Someone jokingly asked whether it had a manual inflation method, should it fail. Another vendor demonstrating some of the coolest tire changing units. The unit pays for itself after only 20 tire changes.

Outside *Max’s BMW* had a giant tent with a service area, *Motolights* was installing auxiliary lighting and *Rick Meyer* was offering rally specials on his custom saddles. Other vendors were also set up. There were several food vendors and my choice for an early lunch was the “Sausage Hut.” With a name like this you knew this was the place for hamburgers, but I opt for the spicy sausage with onions and peppers, and was not disappointed. On the other hand the French fries were gross and enlightened me on why the fryer oil should be changed occasionally. As typical with these events the vendors were price gouging on water and sodas. If my calculation is correct, soda was selling for \$880 a barrel versus \$76 a barrel for oil.

BMW Motorrad had an impressive showing of the new bikes. But if you read the bike rags and have made a few recent visits to your friendly local dealer, there was nothing exciting. I heard people were lining up at 5:30 AM to get on the demo ride list.

To escape the heat, I found the vintage bike display in one of the exhibition halls. This year, *BMW Mobile Tradition*, the Vintage BMW Motorcycle Club and Peter Nettesheim teamed up to bring together one of the best displays of old BMWs. Bikes from the 1920s through the 1990s were on display. Someone brought an unrestored Krauser bike based on the BMW platform. Peter Netteshiem who’s private museum was on display at the *AMA Motorcycle Heritage Museum* as the BMW “Mastery of Speed” Exhibit last year in Ohio was set up. What is cool about Peter’s bikes is that they all have current New York registrations and can be ridden without much preparation. For car buffs, there was a restored 2002 BMW tii that was reenacting a traffic stop with a restored police bike behind it. The vintage boys, including Roland Slabon, were on hand to kibitz about all things pre-/5. Unfortunately, I never had the opportunity to meet Earl Forks, the guy everyone was talking about.

Friday, July 21, 2006 – Rally Day Two

As I said before, this was a “rider’s rally,” so my buddy Chris Alberto and I decided to skip the various seminars being offered to enjoy the Vermont roads. No “Airhead Tech,” no “Oilhead Tech,” no “Exploring New Zealand by Motorcycle” or “Motorcycling for the

Vertically Challenged;” instead, it was ride time! The best “freebee” of the rally came from *Mad Maps*; it was a glossy map made especially for MOA attendees that highlighted five loops using Burlington as the starting point. Over a breakfast of biscuits and gravy (mine) and pancakes (Chris’) at Libby’s, a little 1950’s diner car, we look at our maps and discuss the various rides. Despite the overcast skies and negative weather forecasts, we decide to follow the orange loop to explore Northern Vermont and the Lake Champlain islands. Since Chris had never been to Canada, we modified the ride to include a little of Southern Quebec.

US-2, across the bridge, to South Hero. Once we crossed onto the island, it started to rain lightly which pulled the temperatures down to a welcome 85 degrees. We pulled into the parking lot of a small hardware store to pull on our rain suits. Luckily, the rain only lasted about a half hour.



There was no traffic on the island and the road followed the water’s edge. The weather and fog made it difficult to see the New York Shore, but it was a beautiful ride nonetheless. There were several “For Sale” signs on the waterfront homes we passed.²

We continued North on Route 129 to Route 78, then North on 207. The road off the island took us into beautiful, lush farmland. We turn North on Route 207 toward the Canadian (or Canadien). We cross into Quebec at Morses Line. Either crossing into Canada has gotten more difficult or the customs officer was annoyed with us photographing his station. The officer asked a lot of questions, including “Having you ever been refused entry into Canada?”³, and verified our licenses. It took us fifteen minutes to clear customs.

Relying on our GPS units, we rode northeast toward Frelighsburg. The town has a few restaurants and antique shops. Although we rode through the town, it would be worthwhile park the bikes and explore the town. We continue east toward Abercorn. The GPS leads us down an unpaved road. Chris, who is riding a nice shiny, new R1200RT, is making a few choice verbal and visual comments. But since the GPS indicates that we will be on the road for only two miles, we decide to continue. The GPS leads us from one unpaved road to another. Each road gets worse and we encounter farm traffic that we need to weave around. I can only imagine what the Quebecois

² The day before I had glanced over a real estate paper and these houses were listed for \$300K to \$500K. Considering that this included 100 feet of waterfront and three to six acres, the prices seemed reasonable. Airfare to these “affordable” weekend retreats ranges from \$300 to \$450 roundtrip out of Philadelphia.

³ It was tempting to respond, “No, but it probably would be a good idea,” instead of the simple “No.”

farmers are thinking when two bikes with New Jersey plates pass them. We get passed by several dump trucks hauling ass and gravel.

At one intersection, Chris decides to follow the GPS and I decide to follow what appears to be the start of a paved road. Realizing that I have accidentally “dumped” my buddy in a foreign country he has never been to before, I open the bike up to intersect him where the dirt road comes out. Just as my throttle will not open any further, I see a Quebec provincial police car running radar parked just ahead. I slam the throttle closed and apply my rear brake to shave off speed. I pass the officer at a whopping 80 KPH (or approximately 55 MPH). The officer does not even look up. I was so use to traveling at 30 KPH (approximately 20 MPH) for the last half hour that anything faster felt like the speed of light. I reach the terminus of the dirt road and wait for Chris for about five minutes. But he does not appear. I then travel toward Abercorn. In the distance I see Chris waiting for me. We decided that we had had enough of Canada and follow Canadian Route 139 South to the U.S. We cross back at Richford, VT. The U.S. customs officers were bored and wanted to talk about motorcycles. The biggest chuckle was our “About an hour” response to “How long have you been in Canada?”

From Richford we traveled East on Route 105 to Route 242 South and take a little break at a “two pump” country store in Jay, VT. This puts us on the *Mad Map's* “Blue Loop.” With no cars to be seen, it feels like we own the road. Route 242 becomes Route 118 which becomes Route 109. On some of the mountains and hills we could see ski trails cut into the trees. Something large and brown is on the side of the road. I activate my ABS. It's a moose and I want a picture. As Chris approaches, I watch the moose run into the woods. Chris pulls along side as asks why I stopped; he did not see the moose. We continue riding and I keep scanning the left side of the road looking for this animal. As luck would have it, the moose crossed the road in front of us. Although it moved quickly, the moose had an awkward gait. Pulling aside of me, Chris exclaimed, “That thing is huge!”

At Jeffersonville, we had the choice of making a right and returning back to Burlington or head South on Route 108 toward Smuggler's Notch State Park eight miles away. Smuggler's Notch is a narrow road surrounded by 1,000 foot cliffs. It derived its name by the rum smugglers who used the old Indian path to bring the libation in from Canada. This was the highlight of a great ride. We came through a narrow switch back with no room for error. As we came out of the last turn there were a dozen BMW riders pulled to the side of the road to talk about “the Notch” and watch other riders zip through. Chris and I joined the group and watched a few motorcyclists navigate the turn and scrap some metal. We could hear one woman sitting pillion on a Gold Wing screaming through the entire S.

It was getting late and Chris needed to meet some friends who were arriving in a couple of hours. So, we continued back. In Stowe, we picked up the famous Route 100 and ride past the *Ben & Jerry Ice Cream* (The *Sam Adams* of dairy products) factory in Waterbury. Having toured the facility several years earlier, we did not stop, but it is definitely worth a stop. Then, jump on I-89. The combination of construction and rush

hour, put us in stop-n-go traffic. The only time in the 240 mile ride our speed was dictated by someone other than ourselves.

Leaving the rally, I see another Mystic Rot (red) Roadster. The rider is Jose Alvira (sp?). We talk briefly and decide to grab breakfast in the morning at *Libby's*. Jose wanted to set up his tent and I had dinner plans with two *New Sweden BMW Riders*. After losing a two-to-one vote, dinner was at *The Olive Garden*.⁴

Saturday, July 22, 2006 – Rally Day Three

Weather forecasts for Saturday evening and Sunday were for “severe rain” with lightening. So, I packed the bike three times as I my one trip through the vendor area “overloaded” the available packing space on my bike. Thinking ahead, I duct tape my rain gear in a plastic bag on the pillion seat for easy access.

As Jose and I were catching up over a leisurely breakfast, the sky grows darker. My cell phone rings, and it's Beemer Al (Peirson) wanting to head home with a detour to Putney, VT for ribs. Jose, who needs gloves, and I ride back over to rally. We take a quick walk through the vendor area and wish each other well as Jose purchases a \$60 pair summer gloves. I look at the door prize drawing board and find that both my numbers won a prize. One prize was a set of rear brake shoes that do not fit my bike. The other prize was the book “Motorcycle Journeys through New England.” It a great book and the third one I own! Now to find a place for them on the bike.

Beemer Al and I meet over by the registration tent. As he still needs to pack, we head over to his dorm room at the college. He is on the fourth floor and there is no elevator. Climbing three flights of stairs is not a fun walk wearing full motorcycle gear. Also, the place gave me flashbacks of my college days living in Grange Hall at the *University of Connecticut*. There is no way that I could every live like that again.

As Al finishes packing his bike, the rain starts, so it's on with the rain suits. Al still wants ribs even though it is a sixty mile detour. Ok, Putney it is. We take the direct route – I-89 South to I-91 South. The rain is pounding and visibility is limited, but we manage a 75 MPH average speed.

We pull into the gravel parking lot of *Curtis' All American Bar-B-Q*. This self proclaimed “9th Wonder of the World” is open from 10AM to Sunset daily (rain or shine). Paul Meredith, the number three top mileage *MOA* rider in 2005, and his wife Nancy introduced me to the joint en route to the *RA Berkshire (MA) Rally* in 1998. *Curtis'* is special to me as it is the last diner I enjoyed as a bachelor. This rib joint is comprised of a pair of blue school buses, an eating shelter with picnic tables and a large smoker that is manned by Curtis himself. I introduce Al to this local legend. Curtis welcomes us and gives Al a quick education about his ribs.

⁴ It was the *Outback Steakhouse* on Wednesday night. It should be noted that we have both restaurants in Cherry Hill.

The ribs and chicken are slow cooked over hardwood (rock maple, cherry and ash) coals wood in a split 370 gallon drum. The sauce is based on an old family recipe. These ribs have garnered the attention of the *New York Times* and *Yankee Magazine*.

Next to Curtis is CJ, the potbelly pig mascot, laying down next to the smoker to stay warm. She is friendly and greets us with a few snorts when we pet her.

We both order a half slab of the spicy ribs with extra sauce. The sweet, spicy and tangy ribs are served on wax paper in a cardboard soda box. The meat drops off the bones as you lift them and melts in your mouth. Sitting behind us are three guys from Rhode Island who made a special trip up for these ribs. Between bites and sucks, Al gives his approval. As we enjoy the ribs, the storm is getting worse; the rain became more intense and is now joined by lightning and thunder.

As we are waiting for a slight break, I suggest the direct interstate route home. Al wants to take scenic Vermont route 9 to New York route 22. In a rib stupor, concede to Al's route. The storm is moving west. So, about fifteen minutes into the ride, we ride into the mess we waited out during lunch. We follow the storm into New York State. On route 22, Al pulls into a miniature golf course. It is raining and the putt-putt course is flooded. This is a hell of a time to decide hit a golf ball through a windmill or into a clown's nose. Al says the best way to finish those ribs is to get some fresh soft serve ice cream. Al has been coming to this place for years. We both order a small cone. He was right, it was the perfect finish.



Heading South, the rain got lighter and by Newburgh, NY it had stopped. We shed some of our rain gear. Because of the time and risk of deer, we take the New York State Thruway back to New Jersey. Lose each other at the Garden State Parkway / Route 17 split. Then, reconnect on the New Jersey Turnpike between Exit 8 and the Richard Stockton rest stop. Al passed me on the Turnpike, we exchange waves and I follow him to Exit 4. I have ridden with the guy for over 400 miles on this trip and on many a Sunday ride; yet, he did not realize the biker following him is me.⁵ I pulled my bike into my garage at 10:30 PM.

⁵ This is confirmed by a telephone call I received from Al the next day.

Epilogue

The BMW MOA rally has a lot to offer and to the rally virgin or some who does not consistently attend them; it has a lot to offer and a lot to see. The vendor area is a cornucopia of BMW accessories that will have you wearing the numbers off your credit card. The seminars offer diverse topics, allow you to listen to national experts and ask questions. The people that you meet camping, in the communal showers, at the seminars, or at the beer tent are great. The music is pretty good. At the last two rallies, well known bands have played – *George Thorogod & The (Delaware) Destroyers* at Lima, OH and *Commander Cody* this year. However, for rally regulars it can become routine. For me, the rally experience is more about the riding and sharing it with friends (as you can tell from this long winded article).

According to the official rally numbers, over 9,000 people attended the rally. This shattered last year's attendance record of 8,200. However, it did not seem crowded. And, unlike last year, RVs and trailers did not appear to be in abundance.

For those who like to camp, but do not want to schlep the equipment, one enterprising man offers a "sherpa" service. For \$20 to \$30 a night, you get a small tent, air mattress, towels, a camp chair and morning coffee. No set-up, no breakdown – lazy man's camping!

Next year, the *35th Annual MOA International Rally* is in West Bend, Wisconsin. The most convenient hotels to the rally site are booked quickly, so make your reservation now if you are even thinking about going.

Another Rally Synopsis

David Hrenchir

The rally in Vermont was my first BMW rally. I was not sure what to expect but knew it had to be better the Harley Owners Group rallies I have been to. I understand the final count was around 9,000 people. All went well and it was nice that they had a location that was almost spitting distance to a McDonald's, a Wendy's, a KFC and a Chinese restaurant.

My first puzzlement was that it took talking to about 15 people before anyone could tell me where the nearest BMW dealer was. I thought that was strange (it was about 4 miles away). The nearest Harley dealer was walking distance, hah! Seminars were fun and information filled. The weather was a touch warm on Thursday but nice on Friday.

I packed up Saturday morning but hung out until the rain hit. And no one snubbed me about me riding in on the Electra Glide. (The R1100RT picked up a nail the day before departure.)

More Rally Stuff

Bobby Moccia sent us the following links on the rally. Does anyone recognize anything?

www.cvfair.com

www.kodakgallery.com/Slideshow.jsp?Uc=mvqzs5e.5tbppsqm&Uy=-d14y7p&Upo

www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060720/N

www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060721/N

www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060721/O

www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060722/N

Exploding Myths

Peter Anstey provided the following link to an informative article that appeared in Motorcycle Consumer News in 1994. It talks about the use of automotive oils in motorcycles, and discusses mineral oils vs. synthetics for motorcycles.

Although a bit dated (synthetics have long been accepted as a superior substitute for mineral oil, and come standard in some motorcycles), the discussion on motorcycle-specific oils is still relevant.

Here's the link: www.xs11.com/stories/mcnoil94.htm

A Quick Get-Off on the Dragon

A friend of the editor sent the following link of a biker "negotiating" a curve at Deal's Gap a bit too fast. Be sure to read the comments below the pictures.

Here's the site:

<http://forums.pelicanparts.com/showthread.php?s=&threadid=244313&highlight=harley+crash>

How many of us can find the mistakes that the rider made? There are several obvious ones.