

BMW Club Journal
December 2004
Flyride Competition Winner
Iain L Griffin & Anne Pacey
(Midlands Section)

WE'D ENTERED THE competition in the BMW Club Journal in December last year. And when, on a cold February afternoon in Fenshire we received a call from Flyride telling us we'd won the fortnight's hire of a bike in the US, plus first and last night's accommodation etc. We were more than pleased to say the least! Sunshine and blue skies waited.

Scott Sargent contacted us with regards to the kind of routes we'd like to take, and he sent us out some ideas that we used to set us off in the general direction of the coast once we were there. We plotted a few ideas, but as we'd never been to America before we settled on the "least planning = more fun" option that we usually do, and it worked out just fine.

We started out from Bend, Oregon on Saturday May 27th. Scott, a very friendly chap,

delivered a Harley Road King to the hotel that morning. The bike was new apart from 68 miles, and had large panniers and a rack, for which we bought a bag and some bungies to spread stuff out. He went through some maps with us again to give advice on roads etc. checked the bike over for us and after some form filling we were led out of Bend towards "The Sisters" mountains, which are a beautiful backdrop to the town. And then we were on our own.

We used the first day to get used to riding on American roads, the bike, and traffic which was quite light and we soon got into the idea of being on the "wrong side" again, having toured Europe, but never the USA. We stopped at Eugene, having gone the long way round along some good twisty roads that climbed and dropped giving some beautiful views along the McKenzie River. We just made it into our hotel when the heavens opened, hopefully this wasn't going to last.

Our general plan of action was to not have one! We got up had breakfast and rode as far in each day as we wanted. The riding of the bike was to be the main reason for the holiday and we intended to exploit that as much as possible. Some days more than others, and this suited the roads we were on so as we enjoyed the twisty bits and views without feeling we had to be somewhere at



Eureka California - started off nice, then ...

any particular time of day. We'd sit and chat to local people in the diners at breakfast, who were always friendly and gave us help in directions when we needed it. We found everyone we met to be polite and extremely helpful, and interested in the fact that we were not Australian but English! Eventually you get used to asking for the "bathroom", but it took a while.

Sunday saw us travel towards the Oregon coast with North Bend as a pre-booked destination. We rode out of Eugene on the 126 in subdued sunshine and eventually a full sunny day. The 126 was yet again a pretty route with many good views and twisty bits for me to have fun on the bike. We joined Hwy 101 Coastal road and headed towards North Bend, the weather scenic views and road being fantastic.

The next morning we left North Bend towards Bandon, Gold Beach, Arcata and Eureka along the Hwy 101. Just outside Bandon we spotted the coastal loop road, which took you right along the edge, providing wonderful views of the sea and sand, with fresh air and blue skies thrown in.

At Port Orford we stopped at a Motorcycle Museum owned by Stan Dishong, a former racer and motorcycle shop owner of some standing.

He has collected a variety of machines, some of which he has actually owned and raced before placing them in his museum. He's a very friendly chap and will give you a tour of the bikes and explain (to us not so mechanically minded ones-Annie) the working of things. Well worth stopping off at indeed.

Incidentally if anyone out there know where he can acquire the in-tank dash panel for a 1932 Ariel Square Four he'd like to know. The museum's web-site is at www.antiquemotorcyclemuseum.com

We carried on along the 101/Redwood Highway, which climbed up and away from the beach going among some of the biggest trees we'd seen so far. The road is a twisty climb up and back down towards Orick and then Eureka.

We then moved on south along the Redwood Highway, stopping at 'The Eternal Tree-House' for coffee. Where we met a couple who were cycling around America and a chap on his Goldwing from Jersey who'd been riding around America since the beginning of May, and who was heading towards Arizona and route 66.

It was rather a damp start to the day but we were rewarded with sunshine and blue skies soon after 10am.

We stopped at the Drive-Through Tree, as you do. Met more friendly Americans, one thing to note about being English and on a bike is that you get used to being a novelty!

Near Piercy we turned onto Hwy 1, it was the most amazing scenery so far, the road was excellent with tight bends one after the other (and I mean tight!).

After a nights sleep we got up early and left the accommodation by 7.30am and went back on Hwy 1 towards Westport, we turned off onto the Branscomb road which is a gorgeous bend twisty road climbing up 1537 feet alongside Eel River which is green/blue and very beautiful.

At Laytonville we were going to travel towards Dos Rios, but the 'pavement' (or road to you and I) ran out about 1/2 way up a very steep hill! We turned round and came back down, a bit disappointed but once we re-routed back onto the Redwood Hwy we were ok.

We made camp at a Best Western (laundry! - keep a supply of 25cent coins for this purpose) and the next day took the bike into Redwood Harley Davidson at Eureka for it's 1000-mile service, which Scott paid for.

This gave us the opportunity to purchase some small stuff for Annie's own Dyna Lowrider back home, much cheaper due to the strong pound and not being rip-off prices either! Very helpful and friendly staff, and whilst the service was done we spent a few hours in the town, which is full of quirky and interesting shops, restaurants etc.

Then next morning we set off on Hwy 299 east, it is another amazing road (once you get past the dual bit). It twists and turns and is known as the Trinity River Scenic Byway, we trundled on through Willow Creek, Burnt

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07000 FLYRIDE (359743) info@flyride-usa.com