

Central California Classic Cycle Club



"We're stuck on old bikes"



Web Site: www.5csclub.net

September 2007



**September 19th meeting (7:30pm) at
The Dam Diner, Friant California**

Changing Times

My first ride on a genuine touring bike was more than 20 years ago on our “new” BMW from Jack’s Motorcycles on West Belmont to our home in Sanger.

When other bikers gave us a wave, I meekly waved back, but only after I was told “It’s what you’re supposed to do.” Since I felt that I was “hanging on for dear life” it took some coordination and concentration to sit properly (no leaning), watch where we were going (as if Larry didn’t know his way home from the motorcycle shop), watch for oncoming bikes (so I could “do what bikers do”) and then execute my wave (preferably in time for the “approaching” biker could see it).

I caught myself holding my breath and gasping when I thought the cars and trucks were getting too close (or maybe it was my chauffeur?). I probably would have fallen off, if it hadn’t been for my nifty new backrest, which was a prerequisite for this purchase. Each mile got a little easier for me, but I was still sticking my hand up to wave about the time the other bike had passed by. (Not only uncoordinated, but no rhythm/timing either).

If you’ve ever seen the 35mm photos that I took at Laguna Seca, you would understand. No one could even tell it was Laguna Seca. When I picked up my film, all I got was hay bales and Armco barriers. That’s it. No rider. No bike. Not even a rear tire. Just hay bales because I “didn’t anticipate” and I “didn’t pan” when I took the pictures. Thank goodness for digital cameras!

So we’re finally getting close to home, and just when I thought my waving was getting better. I got a “What are you doing?!?!?” Gee, I didn’t think I did anything wrong so I said “Nothing.” “Oh, yes you did. YOU WAVED!!!”

Well, yeah, I just learned this new trick ... I mean rule. But OK, I’m confused. Less than twenty (20) miles ago, I was instructed to wave at oncoming bikes, and now I’m not supposed to wave? Since I was afraid to move around on the seat, I didn’t dare lean forward to ask for, or listen to, clarification of this “wave” thing.

OK, better stop waving until I get clarification. At least I had two less things to worry about on my first touring ride. 1) No need to look for oncoming bikes and 2) No need to wave. Just sit still and hang on with a two-handed death grip and most importantly ... breathe.

When we finally got home, I was informed that I had inappropriately “waved at a SCOOTER.” I didn’t even know it was a scooter. I just saw a two-wheeled vehicle approaching, so I waved. I was informed that I was not supposed to wave at scooters. I was only supposed to wave at bikes. “A bike is different from a scooter and a SCOOTER IS NOT A BIKE! You didn’t see me wave, did you?”

Well, truthfully, I was on overload with all of the other things I was trying to do. I didn’t notice if Larry waved or not. Great, something else. Now I have to wait for a cue/clue to

wave? I sure as heck could not tell the difference between an oncoming bike and an oncoming scooter. So what's the difference? A scooter is a scooter? A bike is a bike? Don't wave at scooters?!?!

OK, verbal admonishment received. DRATS ... another thing to worry about while riding. Determine if it's a bike or a scooter (or watch for the cue/clue). If I didn't wave, I felt like I was being rude to the scooter rider. If I accidentally waved to the scooter rider, I have now What? What's wrong with waving to a scooter rider?

I never got a full explanation. I just focused on identifying the oncoming two-wheeled vehicle early enough to wave in time for the rider to see me. When in doubt, don't wave. Just look the other way like you're sightseeing. OK, now I think I've failed to acknowledge the "real bike" rider.

Fast forward 21 years to the Best Western parking lot in Lone Pine, on Highway 395, due east of Fresno. When we returned from dinner, we noticed that another bike had rolled in, but it was already tucked away under a nice gray bike cover.

In the morning, the "bike" turned out to be a "SCOOTER." Now how the heck did a scooter make it all the way over to Lone Pine? No trailer in sight. Not even a pick-up truck. Hmmm.

When we returned from breakfast, we saw a distinguished looking man standing by the scooter. He and his wife (two people on a scooter?) were headed home to Santa Barbara. They had been up to Lake Tahoe and took the "long way" over Luther Pass and Monitor Pass instead of the short way over Kingsbury Grade to catch Highway 395 for the trip home. Wow! Santa Barbara to Lake Tahoe for a ride, not a vacation, just a ride.

Here's a couple, in their 60's, riding a scooter up and down the state of California, and having a blast. It was a 2004 Suzuki 650 Burgman and it had more than 40,000 miles on it. Their previous ride was a Vespa, although they didn't venture out of Santa Barbara on it. Now that they had a "big" ride, they were catching up on all the neat roads in California.

So why the scooter instead of a bike? He offered the following:

Same: 50 miles per gallon, 117 mph max (more than any West Coast speed limit), motorcycle drivers license required.

Plus: Lower center of gravity (easier handling for the over 60 crowd), no shifting, floorboards with options for various foot positions

Minus: Limited luggage capacity, although this bike had a Givi topcase for the lightweight items, smaller wheels make for bumpier rides (i.e., Highway 99 he said.

After trading the usual “Have you ever been on _____ (fill in the blank) road or to _____?” stories, I decided that it was a wonder we hadn’t bumped into these folks at another motel parking lot. They had been up and down the state, mostly on the back roads (remember: small wheels = bumpy ride) several times. He was rattling off the names of good roads, nice motels, great restaurants, etc.

We had to concede when he told us about one of his favorite rides: Little Panoche Road to Monterey “but you have to back track to get gas at Tres Pinos, so you can enjoy the sights instead of watching your gas gauge/mileage.”

When we had two BMW’s stashed at “Little Brother’s in Pittsburgh, PA” we covered a lot of territory. We rode the East Coast from Charleston, NC to Maine. We even went to the Eastern Canadian Provinces: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Tourist stuff: Niagara Falls, Cooperstown NY (Baseball Hall of Fame), Indianapolis Speedway, Bowling Green, KY (Corvette Museum), Asheville, NC, Gettysburg, PA, Washington, D.C. and Ben & Jerry’s Ice Cream in Stowe, VT.

Motorcycle Museums in Columbus/Pickerington, OH, Maggie’s Valley, NC and of course York, PA.

We have ridden from our friends’ place in Arkansas to Natchez, Mississippi and then back up through Nashville (The Natchez Trace) and up to Louisville, KY (Corvette Plant/Museum and Mammoth Cave).

We’ve covered the West Coast too many times to count. Several trips to Victoria, BC and also through the Canadian Rockies to Banff and Jasper National Parks. Down through Glacier and Yellowstone. Also, Zion, Bryce and the Grand Canyon more than once. Larry just got back from his trek to the Arctic Circle!

But ... we have never ridden Little Panoche Road. I have to admit it. Never been there. Never done that. No Little Panoche. Not even in a car. It’s terribly embarrassing. It’s worse than waving at that scooter in 1986.

Leilani Koop

MY VISIT WITH THE MAD MOTORCYCLE SCIENTIST

I finally went on a vacation with my wife last week. Well, it was really a mini-family re-union for my wife & her 3 sisters. The girls rented a vacation home in Cayucos and were nice enough to invite/threaten their respective husbands to come along. Lucky for me it was the week before the Laguna Seca races and I HAD to take my motorcycle. My brother-in-law (Dennis) and his son-in-law (Matt) were also going to the races with me and brought their motorcycles along too. During the second month (okay...it was only 2 days, but it SEEMED like 2 months!) I remembered that Jim Camack lived nearby and looked for his number in the phone book (Jim and I have known each other since he used to work at "Wilson's Motorcycles" and he graduated from high school with my wife). There it was! I dialed the number and woke up his wife (Robyn works nights) and figured I was toast! Robyn wasn't mad at all & said Jim was on his morning ride & that she'd have him call me when he got back. Jim called back shortly and we made arrangements to meet at his favorite coffee shop in Los Osos the next morning at 7 am. I knew Jim had a collection of motorcycles and I was busy telling Dennis and Matt about what a great rider Jim was and that he was a motorcycle nut. I also told them that we would have a valid excuse to be away from the house for most of the day.

Next morning we left the house at 6 am for the 20-minute ride to Los Osos...no sense wasting time (or chancing the wives waking up and giving us "instructions" before we left). We were waiting patiently for Jim when he rode up on his '73 Z-1. Heard it before I saw it..."Kerkers" are good for that! Jim rides up next to our bikes & dismounts. "I hate you!" Were my first words...I used to have a Z-1 & his looked almost just like the one I used to have. Jim & Dennis & Matt & I had breakfast and met all of his buddies at the coffee shop before taking the short ride to his house. Jim introduces us to Robyn & then takes us back to his "workshop".

Jim tells us to be careful where we step & we are. Then he starts taking the covers off of his collection...oh my...holy crap...Jim's got all of the bikes I used to have and all of the ones I wanted to have! And ones that I thought no one had any more!!!! And there's a story behind each one. The one his kid rode to high school. The one he & his wife flew past the "crotch rocket" on while riding double. Jim has a very eclectic collection and something to please everyone. I was in motorcycle heaven. Then off to his garage.

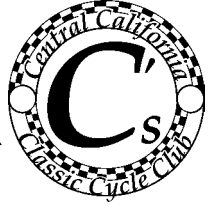
Jim is working on a Chevy wagon that has about a million horsepower. He's doing all of the work himself and seems to know everything about every car or motorcycle ever made! Jim shows us some of his electronic gear and fires up his ham radio set. Motorcycles, cars, electronics...is there anything he doesn't know about? Shoot...I'm getting all kinds of calls on my cell & answer all the ones that aren't from my wife or daughter. Finally I have to admit that it's time to go. I don't want to wear out my welcome & my wife thought we were only going to be gone for coffee. I've got some 'splainin' to do! We make arrangements to meet the next morning when we are leaving on the motorcycles to ride up Highway 1 to the races.

The next morning Jim arrives at Cayucos and we ride to the gas station to top off the bikes. We ride each other's bikes around a little bit & then Jim tells us the quickest route to the highway. Jim says he really should make it to the races next time & I tell him that he'd better. Next one is in September. We head north and the "Mad Scientist" heads south...back to his workshop. What a great week!

Jimmy Johnston



EVENTS CALENDAR



September 22 & 23

Ride to Lake Topaz

A wonderful 2 day back road ride in the beautiful and scenic Sierra Nevada Mountains to that Casino Oasis, Lake Topaz Lodge. The ride is put on by the CJMC (Classic Japanese Motorcycle Club). Larry Green and Neil Rodrigues are the ride hosts and will guide you on this breathtaking and scenic mountain tour.

Topaz Lodge, Hwy 395, Topaz Lake NV.

Reservations: 1 800-962-0732 or 1 702-266-3338

September 22

BMW of Fresno Open House

Don't miss the BMW of Fresno Fall Open House September 22nd. Bring your family and friends for special deals, vendor booths, free food, drawings and more. Call 1-866-811-4BMW for more information or

<http://www.bmwoffresno.com>

September 28 & 29

Motorcycle Races at the Caruthers Fair

Put on by the Fresno Motorcycle club

http://caruthersfair.com/motorcycle_Quad.htm

www.fresnomotorcycleclub.com

October 14

The Annual 5C's Garage Tour

For Info Call Larry Koop (559) 456-3245

October 6th & 7th

Pine Mountain Club CA.

FRAZIER PARK FESTIVAL / VJMC 2007 WEST COAST NATIONAL RALLY

<http://www.vjmc.org/calendar/FRAZIERPARK/FP2007.htm>

October 20 & 21

5C's Morro Bay Ride

Two days of scenic Central California Coast Riding. Saturday is the Dinner ride. Meeting place is at Spencer's Market on Main St. at 2:30pm - Sunday is an all day ride (about 90 miles, destination, who cares!). Please meet at Spencer's Market at 3:00pm. The featured theme motorcycle for this ride is the classic 2 cycle, 2 stroke, 550cc or smaller preferred. If you don't have one of these smoking gems, bring what ya got. All bikes are welcome. It's all about having fun.

For Info contact Larry Koop (559) 456-3245 or Bob Duncan (805) 772-1553

To submit articles or information for the newsletter, you can send it by e-mail to squeegle@comcast.net or by snail mail to: T.J. Gilchrist 4444 W. Palo Alto Ave. Apt. 103 Fresno, CA 93722-9000 Phone # (559) 431- 0190

Classifieds

FOR SALE

Want to to easily save three thousand bucks or so!

2005 Triumph Thruxton for Sale...absolutely mint like new condition with only 4500 miles on the clock...color is black. Registration paid through Aug 08. There is roughly a thousand dollars in extra stuff included such as: billet bar end mirrors (stock mirrors incl.), Triumphs "off road" pipes (stock pipe incl...carbs have been jetted for the pipes by the dealer), vintage look tank knee pads, small clock, rear peg elimination kit (have the stock rear pegs that bolt right back on, battery tender BMW style charge plug. Increased counter sprocket one or two teeth (can't remember...stock sprocket included) for a more pleasant freeway cruise without any real effect on the bottom end. Also there are new RKA saddle bags included in the deal along with some new oil filters. **Asking \$6500.**



Call Gary Rosa at 696-2438

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5th Annual

FRAZIER PARK
FESTIVAL OF VINTAGE
Motorcycles



October 6th & 7th, 2007

Pine Mountain Club, California

Saturday: 7am - 7pm • Sunday: 8am - 2pm

- ▶ Pine Mountain Club Vintage Motorcycle Show
- ▶ Mil Potrero Awards Banquet
- ▶ Tecuya Dual Sport Ride
- ▶ Frazier Park 100 Rally
- ▶ Mt. Pinos Endurance Rally
- ▶ Quatal Canyon Motorcycle Swap Meet



For more information, event descriptions and directions, visit:

www.visitfp.com

General Admission is FREE!



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