

Central California Classic Cycle Club



"We're stuck on old bikes"



Web Site: www.5csclub.net

August 2011



Sydney

August 17th Meeting 7:30pm at The Dam Diner

Laverda Rally 2011

On Tuesday, July 5, Jon loaded two of his three Laverdas into the trailer, we dropped Daisy at the kennel, and headed north – destination Nakusp, British Columbia. This would be the twelfth annual Laverda Rally of which we have attended five.

Our plan was to divide the 1200 mile trip as evenly as we could into three days, so it turned out just right, with various lunch and gas stops, 24 hours, 8 per day, three days at an average speed of 55mph (thanks to the help of our trusty GPS).

Intending to make the journey part of the vacation, we booked the Boxcar at the Railroad Resort in Dunsmuir, CA for our first overnight. The experience fully lived up to our expectations. The setting in the shadow of Mt. Shasta is spectacular. About 25 vintage railroad cars have been converted to hotel rooms with all the amenities. The resort has a small pool and spa, very welcoming on this 103F day. The restaurant is only open on weekends, so this being Tuesday, we ventured into town for dinner. The trailer right tire blew on the way into town and Jon had it changed before the AAA guy arrived. Dinner at the “microbrewery” was unremarkable but adequate.



Our box car at the Railroad Hotel

We hit the road early Weds AM to get to the closest Les Schwab tire place at opening. In less than an hour we had a new spare and were on our way to Boardman, OR, our next overnight. The ride was happily uneventful and pleasant, and we arrived at our hotel on the Columbia River in time for a nice swim. We took a walk along the banks of the dramatic river, where, most unusually, the wind was not howling. Dinner was a big improvement over the previous evening, but this lovely resort dining room was nearly empty. We tried to figure out how this place stays in business, but no one seems to know....

Our third day on the road, the scenery and weather changed pretty dramatically with temperatures dropping about 60F and terrain turning mountainous. When we reached the US/Canada border, we were astounded to find that, at this remote crossing, the US is building a gigantic customs station – our tax dollars at work – to process the maybe 10 cars that pass through here daily. Anti-terrorism??? Who knows? Anyway, the Canadians, with their humble little station graciously welcomed us to their country and let us through without even opening the trailer.

We arrived at the Rally site about 5PM and were happy to see that some of the “regulars” had already arrived. They immediately descended on Jon’s new/old 75 Laverda and began the initial steps of the restoration (disassembly!). We knew we had made a good deal on our “find” when Wolfgang (Mr. Laverda North America) asked if he could buy it from us! Of course, the answer was “NO.” A laundry list of replacement parts was pulled from Wolfgang’s extensive warehouse, and we left with everything Jon would need to bring this baby back to its original beauty. The good news is it started up, and he rode a bit before the disassembly continued.



This year's lineup of Laverda's plus

head Ducati. Furthest rider from home rode a Laverda from Boise, Idaho. He and one other were the only other Americans. We had some interesting conversations about Canada’s politics and socialized health care.

When all ralliers had arrived, there was a total of 17 Laverda’s and an array of other “exotics,” Ducatis, Moto Guzzis, etc. Less garage work this year than previous years, but lots of techno/bike conversation. I was about the only female who did not ride her own bike. One of the lady riders from Medicine Hat, Alberta, holds a 200mph record at Bonneville from Canada. Her bike is an old bevel

The weather in southeastern BC was unseasonably cold and on the Friday it stormed and blew, so no riding. But Saturday it warmed a bit and didn’t rain, so we took a really good 120 mile round trip to have

lunch in a touristic town called Kaslo. I had my first Buffalo Burger – turned out not to be the best choice. The scenery along the route was gorgeous, towering forested mountains and rushing streams and rivers. The roads are in A-1 condition and there is virtually no traffic. About perfect riding and the bike (and Jon) rode flawlessly.

Saturday night is the traditional Rally dinner which was fun, but the cold evening temperatures eventually sent us back to our cozy cabin. Sunday dawned bright and clear and we “hung out” as most of the other participants in the rally mounted up and headed home. I had a “phone scare” when a text from ATT arrived informing me that I had amassed large data charges and my service was being suspended!! A thirty minute phone call to ATT international resolved the issue - \$400 to \$60. But beware using a smartphone once you leave the US!!! Jon reassembled the restoration Laverda leaving a few key items behind for Wolfgang to work on in the months ahead like carburetors and gauges.



Me and the Jota in Kaslo, B. C.

Our final Nakusp meal was at the Halcyon Hot Springs resort, quite hi-end and lovely. The bikes were loaded and we were packed for an early Monday departure. The trip home was a retrace of the trip up, this time having a wonderful dinner in Mt. Shasta City. We arrived in Madera in time to retrieve our menagerie, dog and parrot.

All in all it was a good trip, marred only by some unseasonably cold weather in Canada which limited outdoor activities, and one flat tire. Will we go again next year? We'll see.....

B. Sands

Dempster Highway

There were no ride reports from Alaska and the Yukon this year for a number of reasons. I am thinking of submitting the following story to the BMW Owner's News. The Haul Road is the road made famous on the "Ice Road Truckers".

So you think the Haul Road is tough? There is another road in the far north that is longer, is as difficult or more so, is much more scenic and has a native village at the end. It is the only road in Canada to cross the Arctic Circle. This is my story of riding the Dempster Highway. I arrived in Dawson City, Yukon from south Florida a few days early for the Dust to Dawson (D2D), an annual gathering of dual sport riders. There was just enough time to do the 914 round trip miles of the Dempster. The receptionist at the Downtown Hotel said most of the riders attempting the ride this year were turning back. If I listened to everyone I would never get off the couch, I decided to give it a shot. As I left Dawson City there was a steady rain. Not a downpour like Florida, but enough to turn the road to slop, sting my face when the face shield was up and make it impossible to see when the face shield was down. The first 25 miles were 3" of mud slicker than that stuff that comes from your nose. Not having a lot of mud experience I kept reminding myself "relax your grip and stay on the gas". I was running about 40 mph but felt the big GS with knobbies would handle better at a higher speed. At some point you have to have the courage to bump it up or stay at a slower speed so it doesn't hurt so much when you crash. I kept it at 40. I should mention that I have an implanted defibrillator. It works just like the paddles you have seen on TV. Gives you one hell of a jolt! Mine works when my heart stops, gets out of rhythm or exceeds 182 beats per minute. I was constantly aware of the 182bpm for the entire trip. I did a lot of deep nose breathing that I learned in Yoga to keep the anxiety under control.

After the mud I took a break to assess the situation. I didn't know what the next 425 miles held but if I turned around I knew what the last 25 held. The next 200 miles were only sporadically terrifying. When I could look the scenery was magnificent.

Eagle Plains is halfway and the only place to get gas and a room. Unfortunately, there were no rooms, so I pushed on to Rock River campground. At Rock River there was a cook shed that contained a wood burning stove and some picnic tables. I put my sleeping bag on a table and put the flimsy latch on the door. The thought of that latch keeping out a bear was pretty funny but I was too tired to care.

The next day as I approached the Arctic Circle the wind became intense. I was recently in Patagonia where the wind was also intense. This was actually stronger but did not last all day like Patagonia. No matter how much I leaned and fought it the bike was steadily and firmly being pushed off the road. Since

the road is built on a 4' to 8' gravel pad on top of the permafrost the drop off can be steep. I did not know what to do. This situation was not covered in any of the riding courses or books that I have read. I could feel the 182 creeping up. After making it through the wind came the first of two ferry river crossings. Looking down the bank to the boat on ramp I could see the last 15" was very deep soft dirt with big ruts. "How many f***** challenges can one road have?" Not to worry there were still more to come.

After the river crossing came 20 miles of deep gravel. This was 20 miles of semi controlled chaos. Only a few times did the front end go goofy but the bike did not go down. I must have one of the world's strongest sphincters, then finally some good hard packed dirt. The big boxer was purring at 65 to 70 mph. This was great!! I was really rolling down a long downhill with a big right hand sweeper at the bottom. By the time I saw the deep, sloppy mud hole it was too late. I hit it at full speed. I had absolutely no control of the bike. How the bike and I made it through I have no idea. I do know it had nothing to do with my riding skills.

Riding a motorcycle under good conditions can test your abilities, throw in a bad road, bad weather and a mediocre rider and I was at the extreme edge or beyond my capabilities. When I rolled into Inuvik I was as mentally and physically exhausted as a 66 year old man can be. I really wanted a glass of wine. It was Aboriginal Day, a day to celebrate the native people. The only liquor store was closed. A local Harley rider took me to his apartment and gave me a half bottle of Chardonnay. It tasted great. I take back everything bad I have ever said about Harley's.

It was a very neat experience to be north of the Arctic Circle on the summer solstice. The sun never dipped below the horizon but I did not actually see the "midnight sun" because I was sound asleep. As I lay in bed that night I thought "what have I got myself into?" If there was any way of avoiding that road on the way back I probably would. Vince Lombardi said "fatigue makes cowards of us all". I don't know about you but he was sure right about me.

As a member of the Iron Butt Association my license plate holder says I am one of the world's toughest riders. The only option was to get up the next day and do what had to be done. The day was bright and sunny, no rain and I started back down the Dempster which I was now calling the Dumpster. The ride back was a pure delight. The gravel did not seem as deep, the wind was not as fierce and most of the mud had dried. I did all 457 miles in one day and rode into Dawson City early that evening supremely confident in my riding skills--- ha,ha!! What a difference a day makes. Larry Corell

For more info: <http://www.env.gov.yk.ca/pdf/DempsterFinalWeb.pdf>

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Leather Repairs & Alterations

For those needing alterations or repairs to leather goods such as jackets, pant, chaps, or to Nylon/Cordura type items, there is a lady in Clovis who does great work.

Mali (pronounced Molly) has the heavy duty machines to do such repairs and also fun stuff such as sewing patches on jackets. etc.

She used to be the in-house leather person for a large motorcycle shop but now does repairs out of her home workshop. For leather panel covering or replacing, stop by Tandy Leather on Clovis Avenue with your item. They will sell you the right leather for her to install.

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