



Terry's Travels

TT12-1 Leaving Florida 10/07/2004

At the Harley shop in Melbourne Florida a tanned and blonde haired youth brought my V-ROD (Roddy) round from the wash bay, newly tyred, serviced and gleaming. They had charged the Harley factory 60 dollars for putting a new press stud on my saddlebags (warranty) so you can imagine I didn,t have much change from 1,000 bucks. He said "sweet as a nut".It felt fantastic to ride him again in the hot sun. A vague wandering wore off as I carefully scuffed in the new tyres - you have to look for bends here. Just before I got back to my "digs" (room) a thunderstorm struck big time. My face (no helmet) was peppered with stinging needles as the lightning flashed, crashed and boomed - welcome back to biking USA. I had just been for a massage too and the oils washed down and badly stung my eyes - I had to stop. As soon as you get into the air con here what were just wet clothes in 90 degrees plus are then VERY chilly.

Next day I called to see a friend at his counting house (he's a realtor - property developer). He was out of his office and his girls were diligently counting his money. I had called to see his new Bentley that he waited 3 years for, I think called an Arnage, the one outside his office was a British Racing Green Bentley Mulsanne that his girls said was a "loaner" whilst his more sporting one was having its 500 mile service - do they REALLY polish all the coins in the ashtray?

My travels this time are just me and Roddy heading N from Cocoa Beach FLORIDA headed for IOWA so the first days ride will be towards ALABAMA. I plan to use libraries along the way to report my progress over the expected 2,500 miles in the next 2 weeks.

Terry - Cocoa Beach, FLORIDA.



Terry's Travels

TT12-2 Thunderstorm in Alabama 12/07/2004

I had ridden to Daytona Beach quite a few times but being a Saturday I saw LOTS of bikers - and its not Bike Week. I was glad to leave some of the heavy traffic and ride the 40 West through Ocala Forest before the lovely 27 N through the horse country. It was HOT - a humid 95F. I stayed at Perry where I had a beer in the Mexican restaurant opposite the Best Value Motel before a Pizza Hut lunch (it means the size and value) pasta for dinner with a self serve salad - excellent and a generous tip was only \$1 on top. Next morning I was the first customer for what they call a complimentary breakfast. Serve yourself cereals, toast your own, spread with a squeeze container of hydrogenated looks like butter and even a squeeze on jam. It all tasted good though even on polystyrene plates. The small dining area was adjacent to reception where the God Channel was on loud. I heard the ranting - sorry - preaching which was about PMA Positive Mental Attitude so I imagined that I would have a good day on my gleaming Harley. It wasn't hard.

On the road by 6:15am it was wonderful, misty but warm with dew on all the lush vegetation. My route took me W on 98 before N up to the 20 and W to the 231 that was to take me into ALABAMA. My plan is to follow the time line between Eastern and Central time. I called as planned to Phenix City and crossed the river into GEORGIA and back before taking the good riding road the 431. I stopped early in Opelika where a cheap Motel 6 had a pool - I had earned it riding in the heat.

Another early start had me on the road 431 N just before dawn - the sun rising to my right having given a pre display of fantastic colours. Somehow I feel superior when I start so early - in fact my mind wanders - why did I wonder who was the first person to use a blue indicator for main beam?

Terry - in a library in NE ALABAMA - just had a big thunderstorm but dry now



Terry's Travels

TT12-3 A HOT Nashville 14/07/2004

The bend swinging just got better and better as the dawn light improved heading N up the 431. This is biking territory and it improved again as I took the 9. My journey was starting to come together as a great biker trip. The sky darkened SERIOUSLY and I pulled into a filling station just in time for the heavens opened and the wind blew - it was incredible. I bought a coffee and borrowed a Cycle Trader (you never when I may NEED another bike!). By the time I had finished the coffee and the magazine I risked riding again, with just the few occasional heavy drops keeping the air cooler. I found a library and caught up with my Emails before taking the scenic I24 through the hills in the direction of Nashville crossing into TENNESSEE. I rode some of the 41 again towards Nashville and ran again the I24 stopping at the Music City Best Western to get into some aircon - I had seen 95 degrees and in this humidity that feels HOT - even on two wheels.

The gay reception guy was fussy but recommended that I try Tootsies for a night downtown. What great advice. I found it easily - it is just one of the many music bars on Broadway. The country group was excellent playing such stuff as Sweet Home Alabama and a very lively Rockytop Tennessee. Of course there were a couple of tall snake hipped cowboy types that were doing the fast step dancing, cheered by a receptive audience - simply wonderful and just why I travel. I listened to several other bands in different bars. Walking outside was very oppressive with 89 degrees and humid even at 10pm! It was good to get the breeze on the ride back to the motel.

Watching TV next morning told me to expect the hottest day of the year so I decided to move out of the city despite the music calling me again. There was talk of tornadoes but not in my planned direction. I called for a drink at a Harley shop - water is one of the few freebies. Then it was to a unique area called The Land Between the Lakes. A whole National Park area and something that America does so well. I was soon bend swinging again and looking at bison and elk. I crossed into KENTUCKY before coming out of the N entrance and headed to Paducah to spend the night. Once again a Pizza Hut had a good deal - serve yourself from the salad bar and buffet of pasta and pizza for \$4.99. Lots of fat customers (bigger than me!) made me careful not to serve myself too much.....

Terry -



Terry's Travels

TT12-4 Mississippi/Missouri 14/07/2004

You know that I like to look for interesting notices - this was in a store.....

SPECIAL OFFER

"FREE RIDE in a Sherriffs Car
when we catch you shoplifting "

Travelling W on the 62 Roddy turned 12,000 miles today at just a year old. This current journey has clocked up some 1500 miles so far from Florida. and has brought me to the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers at Cairo ILLINOIS. This was a very significant starting point just 200 years ago for Lewis and Clsrk to start their exploration of the West. I stopped by a giant Cross and enjoyed the river overlook at this important point.

I left Cairo on a route called The Egyptian Trail and passed The Mound, a significant cemetery dating to the Civil War. Just a series of small towns with nothing notable until I reached the suddenly busy University town of Carbondale with specialities in Energy and Conservation (YES! in America) and even a research power station. This has spawned much industrial estate growth with the railroad alongside. I rode N on the 13 before stopping in Belleville where the Asian owned motel was OK - my out of date AARP card is helping with discounts.

Next morning a short ride W on the 15 took me close to the centre of St Louis - it was extremely quiet feeling and I easily took the bridge over Mississippi river into MISSOURI. I had seen the landmark Arch from quite a distance where it seemed to frame the skyscrapers. Now at the base I really appreciated its immense size. I rode around the centre but was not captivated so rode on W in heavier traffic before crossing the Missouri and turning N up the 79 - this is Missouri's Great River Road.

I lunched at Clarksville overlooking the river where I saw enormous barges carrying goods up and down the muddy Mississippi river. The riding quickly became wonderful - quiet - good surfaces - glimpses of the river - but most of all BENDS. Roddy felt really planted and the smooth long bends were exciting at 60mph. The vegetation all around was lush and productive.

I decided to recross the river and spend the night in Quincy Illinois. The Days Inn was near an Irish bar and an Italian restaurant - all I needed to end a great day

Terry - Quincy Library, ILLINOIS.



Terry's Travels

TT12-5 Bentley correction 17/07/2004

My Bentley owning friend Martin Emailed to point out that I screwed up the models. To put things straight the "loaner" was an Arnage and Martin's own car is a sexy Continental GT - a 'bargain' at \$150,000. I did a bit of further research, Rolls Royce was bought by BMW - their new model doesn't impress me - the back doesn't look to belong to the massive front. VW are Bentleys' owners now. They won the 2003 Le Mans 24 hour race with a Bentley Speed 8. The Continental GT has 552hp and 198mph top speed sprinting from 0-60 in 4.7secs - pretty good FOR A CAR.

Back to my 2 wheel journey. I continued up The Great River Road N through ILLINOIS on the 96. Again the riding was wonderful, especially when I was right alongside the mighty river. Large patches of colourful lilies were growing in the sluggish flowing parts. I rode on through historic Nauvoo and was stopped by three superb figures on crosses amongst the many gravestones at the Cemetery. It was especially peaceful here since the graveyard had very healthy cornfields surrounding it.

Just a few miles further N I re-crossed the river at Fort Madison and entered my final State of IOWA. Next to the historic wooden Fort Madison on the banks of the Mississippi was a much newer gambling boat - it seems quite a connection as I have seen many huge Casinos floating money away from punters.

The 2 West was yet another scenic byway 'Lincoln Heritage' and again was sprinkle caught me but wet roads sprayed my jeans, but only a few miles later they were dry again.

I have now met my late pal Skip's widow Louise at a place called Pella where she was working. Pella is just a few hours from my journeys end of Humboldt. This is a great place to visit as it has strong Dutch connections and feels very European. Good street lights, pavements - even a man made decorative canal and we luckily had some good outdoor music to enjoy. It has such a vibrant community spirit here - oh yes - the Super 8 Motel gets my best motel of the trip (5*).

Terry - Bibliotheek, Pella, IOWA



Terry's Travels

TT12-6 A Remembrance Patch 19/07/2004

This journey's end was Humboldt Iowa the home of my late pal Skip Wiuff so it was a mixture of sadness and wishing to be here to pay my last respects to a great biker pal. Skip's widow Louise showed me pictures of the funeral and I was so pleased to see many of my photos of Skip and our biking trips around the Northern States. I will miss him. Bikes with loud pipes featured at the start of the ceremony by revving LOUD and then riding off into the West, the service not starting until they went out of hearing. The headstone carries a superb engraving of a bike.

A commemorative biker run was organised with over 200 people attending and \$1400 being raised for a local animal charity. I now have a commemorative T shirt in Skip's trademark orange but best of all I will always ride with my leathers carrying the patch for Skip 1940-2003.

I couldn't have been to feel more welcome by all the local bikers and friends. I feel a bit bad about shipping Roddy the V-ROD to my home in Nelson New Zealand. My pal Andy who arranges the shipping is here buying farm implements for his NZ company - he too has succumbed to shipping a bike for himself - he will have the ONLY Exelsior Henderson (they went bust having made just 2,000) in NZ!

The corn is late this year and is much the topic of conversation, the bad weather has slowed up the growth. Tomorrow I will be on the red eye out of Minneapolis via Chicago to Manchester England where again I am expecting the topic to be the bad summer weather.....it already seems such a time since I started this trip in Hot Florida with a relaxing massage and a thunderstorm.

Terry - Humboldt,IOWA.

The ride proved to be 8 days and an easy 2,000 miles with an early return due to stuff happening in England - more later.....