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The Tripper

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The Tripper Report for May - August 2007 (updated 6/12/2013)

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Delaware Valley, Bucks County and Environs May 19th to May 25th

Ride Director: Daniel Telep, Report by: Bob Mueller



This ride was directed by Dan Telep who has previously led this ride several times in his home area. It is based in the sister cities of New Hope, PA and Lambertville, NJ which straddle the Delaware River. It is a wonderful area for cycling with lush forested country roads, covered bridges, quaint towns teeming with charm, stunning luxury homes and well manicured farmsteads.

This was a fixed base ride with different loop options originating each morning from one of the above cities, with the exception of two remote starts that were an easy drive from town. Some of the destinations that were particularly memorable included Princeton, NJ and Washington Crossing, PA where General Washington originated his surprise attack in 1776 on the Hessians. We seemed to find terrific lunch stops each day that proved most

capable in satisfying the appetites that had been generated by that day's cycling challenges.

I participated in this ride two years ago and noted some changes that had occurred in this area in the interim. Although it remains relatively rural, it is apparent that this area "has been discovered" as evidenced by the new home construction, growth of developments and corresponding increase in traffic volume compared to 2005. On occasion, we had to cycle on some roads that had fairly busy auto and truck traffic as we were reconnecting with the quieter country roads. However, I remain amazed that such pastoral country so closely approximates the major metropolitan areas of Philadelphia and New York.

This ride was rated as a 2C. On average, we rode 53 miles (the longest being 58 miles) daily and had cumulative climbing of a little more than 2800 feet per day over the first five days. The totals were somewhat less than projected because of our decision to have two remote starts so that those days were less daunting. On the final day, we opted for an easy and soothing 32 mile ride on a canal path along the river that resulted in less than 150 feet of total climbing. Our director soloed on a more demanding alternative. Dan was receptive to alterations in routing each day for those of us who wished to have fewer miles or less climbing, but this necessitated reliance on our maps rather than the cue sheets. Sometimes these detours required returns on less meandering (and more heavily trafficked) routes.

No specific accommodation arrangements were made in advance by the ride director for participants on this ride, but he was helpful in directing us to several options in the area before we arrived. This flexibility enabled us to individually determine our budgetary allocations for lodging. Several of us stayed at local campgrounds, some at a local B&B and two of us at a nearby hostel. All of these choices seemed to be more affordable than stays at some of the local inns and motels (this is a tourist destination), but some of them involved a 15 - 20 minute drive into town. The downside to our stays at these disparate locations was that we had less opportunity for informal socialization than we may have had if we had stayed together. However, we had daily Happy Hours immediately following each day's ride with goodies supplied by Dan from the back of his truck and several of us would generally reconvene for dinner at local restaurants, where we always seemed to find some outstanding fare. In addition, Dan hosted us to a memorable lasagna dinner in his lovely home one evening.

Participants: Bob Mueller, Daniel Telep, Murray Fishel, Carl Anderson, Mel Anderson, Jerry Robinson, Thomas Nezovich, Ron Marland

Mountains, Mines and Mesas of Southwestern Colorado June 2nd to June 12th

Ride Director: Judy McCarroll, Report by: Gracia Coffin



This BAC ride, organized and led by Judy McCarroll, and van supported by husband, Ralph, was filled with many delights and challenges to meet or exceed the expectations of a varied group of bicyclers. The rating of 3B was pretty accurate, outside of a few uncontrolled or unknown variables – the weather and road construction. Most participants agreed that the first official day of the ride was technically the most difficult – Durango to Silverton, 45 miles and 5570 ft accumulative elevation gain (with two 10,000 ft passes). However, it was actually the third day, Ouray to Telluride, that turned out to be the most challenging. Challenge factors: a fairly constant headwind of 40 mph (gusting to 60 mph on the climbs) while climbing over the Dallas Divide, sharing a 10-mile stretch of absolutely no shoulder road with a steady

stream of extremely heavy construction truck traffic, a very long wait for a section of piloted one-lane road construction about a mile outside of Telluride, and finally arriving in Telluride during an area-wide power outage (no lights, no hot showers, no restaurants, no shopping!). Some grabbed a nap at the Victorian Inn until the power came back on a few hours later, when most of us were able to find something to satisfy our sharpened appetites (though the choices were slim as most restaurants didn't bother to reopen that evening). Most grateful to have a layover day in Telluride to hike, bike, sight-see, do laundry – or just be lazy! More varied opinions were expressed regarding the most enjoyable day on the tour. For actual riding days it was probably tied between the Silverton to Ouray and the Telluride to Dolores routes – both accented by glorious alpine mountain and valley scenery, historic mining operations and towns, and challenging yet pleasant high elevation passes. The first was short in miles (25) with the highest pass during the tour (Red Mountain 11,075'), and completed by an afternoon of fun, mining history, wildlife encounters (mountain sheep and marmots), and waterfalls around every corner - via a jeep tour ride up to Yankee Boy Basin. The second contender was much longer in miles (62.2-65.5, with an optional start via Gondola ride up to Mountain Village), began with a climb to Lizard Head Pass (10,222') and finished with the longest continuous downhill stretch during the tour (48 mi), along the beautiful Dolores River Valley. The best non-riding day was undoubtedly at Mesa Verde, where we had a multitude of options for activities and exploring of this amazing and interesting archeological treasure.

Each day on the tour held its charms and challenges, scenery and history packed as promised. Every riding day presented a significant pass or divide to conquer, but most days were moderate in length, allowing time to explore and/or relax at each town where we stayed. Accommodations were moderate to elegant as were the dining options. The group meals and extracurricular activities really made this tour extra special – the cowboy cookout at the Bar-D Ranch in Durango (complete with singing cowboys and tall tales as we dined on steak and beans seated at long rows of picnic tables), the wild mountain road jeep ride to historic mines outside of Ouray, and the ranger or self-guided walking tours at Mesa Verde's Cliff Palace, Spruce Tree House and Balcony House. Ride description, maps and cue sheets provided were clear and reasonably accurate, and the leadership for the tour was outstanding, especially considering some last minute complications to be worked out with the Park Service (regarding no group bicycling in the park) and our Aramark accommodations at Mesa Verde.

Participants: Ralph McCarroll, Peter Krichman, Rod Harmon, Darrell Follett, Judy McCarroll, Gordon Kniefel, Nancy Follett, Philip Sanderman, Karen Sanderman, John McManus, Brenda Cole, John Phipps, Don Coffin, Bob Boroff, Donald Gettemy, Gracia Coffin, Marjorie Kirk, Yvonne Bates

Happy Valley Ride June 9th to June 15th

Ride Director: William Hardam, Report by: Davis Liles



Happy Valley Ride (2B)

As a newcomer and first time rider at this or any other week long ride / distance, I was apprehensive about the week. Even before arriving I had received much good advice and reassurance from our ride leader, Bill Hardam.

Our first gathering identified our geographical diversity (CO, IN, MI, PA, DE, VA, NC) and wide range of riding experience – beginner to over 30 years. All were excited about the ride and looking forward to its challenges and promise—none were disappointed.

Bill gave us all the background we needed—the ride in great detail (down to the potholes—he, wife Lorena and others—Bruce, Don and Kay-- had combed the rides, paths

and area), the sights to see and visit and what exactly we might expect along the way. We left each evening's social gathering with all we needed to know to enjoy the next day's ride.

We gathered together for kick-off and wrap up dinners that were wonderful and the rest of the time went our own way and were encouraged to get together each evening with different riders. All followed the advice and all 21 riders were well acquainted and good friends by week's end! Our youngest riders were nearing 50 and our oldest were 72 but all felt much younger out on the roads of Happy Valley—maybe that is why they call it Happy Valley! All felt attached to the other members of the group and were extremely helpful to each other—advice, sharing food, riding tips, encouragement and always checking to make sure everyone was doing OK!

Bill and Lorena were an excellent SAG team—always happy to help and available no matter what the time or place in the ride. Special thanks to Bill for putting it all together—hard to imagine a more comprehensive itinerary, better ride information or a more enjoyable time cycling and time spent between rides.

Dinner in the home of a local Penn State family (BAC member Bob Eisenbraun and wife Betsy—great hosts—Bob rode with us one day and also gave a great tour of the Penn State campus) and lunch at their friends Lizzie and C.J. Stoltzfus' Amish farm were extra special feasts. The Penn State Creamery's many delicious treats available at the end of the rides helped make the hill climbs attainable. The Barrens, Black Moshannon State Park "climb, touring caves, an eco-center, Indian artifact museum, fish hatchery, sculpture garden, winery, JoPa's statute/Stadium, the Nittany Lion and the beautiful Penn State campus, farming, mountain and forest venues made each ride one to always remember. The safe roads, great variety of restaurants, excellent hotel (large rooms are terrific for bikes and gear) and the ever present smiling faces of students and fellow riders all added to a week of camaraderie, joy and many good times.

Participants: Tom Sparks, Rickey Davis, William Hardam, Alice Sparks, Jan Warren, Kay Oser, Sally Buttner, Donald Ohlandt, Susan Ohlandt, Wes Johnson, Bruce Damme, Elaine Damme, Leslie Swartley, Patricia Post, Karen Zentgraf, Henry Zentgraf, Cindy Warren, David Patria, Barbara Underwood, Davis Liles

Canadian Rockies June 30th to July 18th

Ride Director: Donald Smith, Report by: Norma Foster Price

Canadian Rockies 2007 – Section 1

We left Kalispell on a warm sunny morning to ride to McDonald Lake in Glacier National Park. It was a beautiful day and a forecast for the whole trip. Our luck held that evening as we were told that in the morning the "Going to the Sun" road would open for the first time this summer. So we were all on the road before 7am to beat the 11am bicycle curfew. It was cool and shady as we climbed the 20 miles toward the sun at Logan Pass. The road damage and repairs were extensive on the downhill side of the mountain. As we rode into head winds we arrived at Many Glaciers to end a challenging day. The next day we rode into Canada to Waterton Peace Park where we enjoyed our first rest day during which everyone did their own thing. Some rode to Cameron Lake, a beautiful mountain lake. Then on to Pincher Creek past lots of hay fields and wind farms (can't have these without lots of wind!) We continued into the Crowsnest area, past Frank Slide, past Sparwood's HUGE truck, and into British Columbia where we crossed the Continental Divide at Crowsnest Pass coming into Fernie. The only negative on some roads was rumble strips which everyone hated. We then headed into the hot springs areas of Fairmont and Radium which provided some muscle relief for those who partook of the warm pools. Our day riding to Banff was long but several people saw bears, mountain goats, elk and osprey which provided diversion along the road. Our second day off provided the opportunity to explore the Banff area. Then we rode along the Bow River Parkway stopping to see Johnston Canyon, a beautiful narrow gorge with fast running water, before riding into Lake Louise where we enjoyed another exploratory day of hiking, biking and shopping. It was a chilly morning as we rode on north toward the Icefields Parkway. We started seeing signs of glaciers high on the mountains we were passing and could only imagine how huge they would be if we were able to fly above them. Everyone stopped at Peyto Lake, and Mistaya Canyon on the way to The Crossing which is just that, a crossroads. The next day we climbed Sunwapta Pass on our way to the Athabasca Glacier and then downhill into Sunwapta Falls which does have a wonderful waterfall. On our way to Jasper we rode along the Athabasca River past Athabasca Falls which are spectacular, complete with rainbows in the cascading water. It was a great trip, great weather, great people and camaraderie, and many wildlife sightings. Throughout the trip we saw grizzly and black bears, osprey and chicks, elk, mountain goats, eagles, and a wolf. Thanks, Don, for the amazing experience!!!

Participants were: Jackie Mastrangelo and Perry Pollock, Foster Dieckhoff and Anita Rodarte, Floyd and Susan DeAndrade, Ralph Singer and Louise Bahar, Larry and Joanne Kahn, Royal and Norma Price, Bill Armbruster, Mary Begley, Rod Harmon, Jon Marcil, Susan Strange, Alma Worthington, Peter Krichman, Denise Jeong, Ray Cosyn, Don Gieringer, Jana Cromer (our outstanding van driver), and Don Smith.

Participants: Jana Cromer, Don Gieringer, Donald Smith, Ray Cosyn, Royal Price, Norma Foster Price, Jackie Mastrangelo, Perry Pollock, William Armbruster, Peter Krichman, Foster Dieckhoff, Anita Rodarte, Susan Strange, Rod Harmon, Jon Marcil, Alma Worthington, Floyd De Andrade, Susan De Andrade, Ralph Singer, Larry Kahn, Mary Begley, Denise Jeong, Louise Bahar, Joanne Kahn

Canadian Rockies Section II July 2nd to July 20th

Ride Director: David Struthers, Report by: Felix Braendel

Don Smith, who planned and led Section 1, also arranged reservations and ride descriptions for Section 2 (the overflow from Section 1). We riders are equally grateful to our hosts Dave Struthers and his wife Jeanne (our van driver). Without their efforts, there would have been no Section 2.

Except for light early rain on our last day, and a few hot days, especially early on, the weather was excellent for cycling: shirtsleeve weather by midmorning, long ups balanced by great downs, more tailwinds than headwinds, and more fast-running streams, rivers, falls, gorges, lakes, mountains and snow fields (in the north) than we are likely to see outside of Alaska--where there are few roads. Also seen: a few bears and cubs, elk, deer, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, 1 wolf, a road-kill coyote, a modest number of birds, and about 10,000 ground squirrels.

When possible, Don's route followed the limited number of side roads; we liked these best. Conditions on main roads varied. Broad shoulders somewhat offset traffic, but jarring cracks and rough pavement encouraged riding in car lanes, then veering right as vehicles approached. Our only serious mishap (Day 8) occurred on the worst section of road, PR3. Our tandem couple, Pat Greene and Chris Witt, passed over the right-lane rumblestrip, failed to correct to the left, and landed in a 3-foot ditch. Injuries to Pat proved moderate, but trip-ending. They flew home on Day 10.

The cumulative costs of eating out for weeks on end is considerable, but meals were less pricey than expected, and the food ranged from OK to very good, as did the accommodations. Every riding day concluded with complimentary wine, beer and snacks, all the more enjoyable because the company was agreeable.

The trip proved unexpectedly instructive. Mike McMahon and Dave learned that Old Milwaukee's Best is not very good. They redeemed themselves by drinking most of it.

Participants: Jean Struthers, Robert Lynn, Donald Smith, David Struthers, Jo-ann Nicola, Patricia Greene, Chris Witt, Chip Sterling, Kathy Sterling, Maryann Graulich, Dusty Hamrick, Richard D Caron, Dennis brua, Claudia brua, William Keckler, Jim Woo, Mike McMahon, Arnie Schwartz, Carol Hunt, Nancy Hurtado, Felix Braendel

Colorado Mountains, Valleys and Brewpubs August 18th to August 30th

Ride Director: James Shaughnessy, Report by: Patricia Post

Colorado Mountains, Valleys and Brew Pubs was a Colorado bicycling trip through and through. Big blue sky, big mountains with long climbs and great downhill.

We began our trip with a scavenger hunt in Dillon and Frisco to locate the local brew pubs and acclimate ourselves to the altitude (a great idea!) The Backcountry Brew Pub provided lunch and shelter from a thunderstorm. Dinner was enjoyed at BAC member Mike and Monique Mustard's home in Frisco. Day 2 began the first of many climbs the ride held in store for our intrepid group of 12. And so our days went. Each day a challenge and more beautiful than the last. Leadville, Independence Pass to Aspen, Redstone, Cedaredge and Montrose (a one room schoolhouse converted to a B & B).
The climbing was incredible.

Ouray was yet another charming western town with great food and a chance for adventures on and off the bicycle. John climbed the additional 4000 feet to Red Mountain Pass, Mike and Bo jeeped the surrounding mountain terrain and Les and Patti ventured into the beautiful Box Canion.

Telluride was our next stop and a day off to rest and enjoy this beautiful mountainside town. The gondola was very exciting in the thunderstorm! The next morning our bicycles went with us on the gondola and we began our ride to Dolores from the top... well almost the top. This day held a climb to Lizard Head Pass and then a long downhill .

On to Mesa Verde National Park and great tour of the Cliff Houses. We enjoyed a farewell dinner overlooking the beautiful park.

Mary Ellen and Jim Shaughnessy led our fun loving, energetic group up the Colorado Mountains, down into the Valleys and into the brew pubs graciously, with style and efficiency. This was a well run , challenging ride with great scenery, good food and excellent accommodations.

Participants: Denise Frontczak, James Sing, Mary Ellen Shaughnessy, James Shaughnessy, Richard Sing, Bo Newsom, Leslie Swartley, Patricia Post, Monique Mustard, John Peters, Alberta Peters, Mike Mc Bride

Springtime in Mallorca May 1st to May 13th

Ride Director: Alison Stone, Report by: Lois DuBois



The Mallorca ride was much like the poet Shelley described in Ode to the West Wind: "Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams

The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams
Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay

We began at the Hotel Delta, a cyclists' mecca just outside Palma, with a bicycle garage, a very well stocked mechanics shop, and a small lunch that fit in our jersey pocket. Day 2 was an 84K loop to the southeast from the hotel. Those who did the whole ride climbed to a monastery where they had an incredible 360-degree view; others chose a shorter route and explored the coast around Cap Blanc and Sa Rapita. Most of the roads were lightly traveled, or they were paved bike paths with an occasional car. The drivers in

Mallorca are courteous, as they are used to cyclists.

Day 3 was an 80K flat cross-island romp to Port de Pollensa where we all had rooms with a balcony looking out to the sea. Day 4 was a 30K ride out to Cap de Formentor, a lighthouse at the northernmost tip of Mallorca. The ride was thrilling, with tunnels, amazing views of the sea and cliffs, and a storybook lighthouse at the end of the road.

Day 5 we cycled 48K to Monnaber Nou, a delightful agriturismo on a hill near Campanet. Day 6 was an optional 80K loop out to Bunyola and back to the hotel. Some cycled the prescribed route and others had a more laid-back day exploring the countryside or hanging out at the hotel pool and sauna. The bike paths were wide enough for one car, or one car and one cyclist. The wildflowers were in full bloom. The best food to be found was definitely at the hotel; several of us eating elsewhere discovered the Mallorcan tradition of spreading mayonnaise over everything on the lunch plate.

Day 7 we traveled to the coastal village of Port de Soller and our seafront hotel. Over the 40K ride we shared the road with a lot of tour buses and learned to stop and let them pass, since there was rarely room for both a bus and a bicycle. Day 8 was an optional 28K ride on sa Calobra, "the snake, which is a must-do for hard core cyclists. While some did this epic ride, others took the 45-minute ferry ride to explore a popular beach at the foot of sa Calobra. Day 9 was an optional 40K ride to Jardins d'Alfàbia.

On our Day 10 route high along the northeast coast, we discovered a new challenge: keeping our eyes on the road instead of the Med. After 30K of climbing, we had a steep 6K descent into Banyalbufar. Our hotel's breakfast terrace had a gorgeous view over the water. Day 11 was an optional 45K loop to Andratx. Our last day, a fast 78K to an agriturismo, was a study in contrast – from the beautiful northwest coast to the dry southern interior.

Alison "The Pink Lady Stone was terrific as a ride leader, and her love for cycling inspires everyone around her. She had thoroughly scouted the island and created rides that were challenging, interesting, and varied. George Root created cue sheets that were close to perfect. The ride rating of 2B was accurate although some of the optional rides probably pushed the limits of a 2B rating.

Photo: The group at Port de Soller.

Participants: Bill Nast, Bill Todd, Rod Harmon, Lois DuBois, John Weiss, George Root, Lawrence Kampel, Robert Lynn, Dorlene Root, Mary Love Nast, Steve Teng, Peter Krichman, Alison Stone, Vicki Elmer, Tom Grant, Robert Deering, Martin Fink, Marisa Fink, Topper Hermanson

Green Roads of Tuscany 2007 May 4th to May 20th
Ride Director: Julie Leever, Report by: Grace Voss



On Day 11, three of us decided to do our own tour of the Val d'Orcia, choosing a road that climbed gradually into the green roads of Tuscany. It was an optional day, meaning the 83-kilometer route from San Quirico to Radicofani and return (3,700 feet of climbing) wasn't a must-do as we were remaining at our hotel for two more nights. About a third of the way out, while passing poppy fields and sheep pastures, Tina remarked, "This should be called the flat roads of Tuscany, to which Pam promptly replied, "Singular...there's only one flat road in Tuscany!"

And that pretty much describes The Green Roads of Tuscany, a two-week tour under the conscientious leadership of Julie and Tom Leever, an organized twosome who love Italy and hope their clients will love it also. Fair warning: this is a hilly tour! From

May 6-19, 2007, we covered 455 miles involving 40,000 feet of climbing. It wasn't the Dolomites by any means. But each day involved ups and downs totaling between 2,000 and 4,000 feet of climbing. However, if you're in good physical condition, the daily rewards are tremendous—green vineyards and pastures in the foreground, with distant views of castles and fortified cities, proof that the Middle Ages were a time of strife between Italy's contentious city states, particularly Florence and Sienna. The roads are excellent, with 95% of the ride in the rural Tuscan countryside (a bus trip took us into busy Sienna for a guided tour). And Italian drivers are excellent also. They drive smaller cars and are respectful of the bicyclist's space on the road. The only hitch? Towards day's end, you will make an extended climb to your destination, as all cities we visited used hilltop settings (and thick walls) to guard against enemy attacks.

Route sheets were accurate and detailed, thanks to Tom's thoroughness, with highlights (frescoes at an abbey, bike shop, a meditative garden, Etruscan museums and a colorful flower market) noted according to kilometer marker. Average distance each day was about 60 kilometers (36 miles), but average elevation gain was 2,600', so remember it's the elevation that makes this a strenuous tour, not the mileage! Also, a couple of short (1 kilometer) pitches were 12

At the end of those strenuous days, Tuscany riders were treated to three and four-star hotels. Julie and Tom have lead this tour for three years, and they know where to stay. They also are careful to assign rooms with patios to all participants, although San Gimignano and San Quirico d'Orcia involved longer stays and thus longer views of those Tuscan hills for some. Group meals (paid for in the trip fee) alternated with evening meals on your own, with Julie taking great pains to make reservations at good local trattorias for small groups. Breakfasts are included, with lunches on your own. Special tour highlights included a tour of an olive oil press and a cooking lesson featuring sauce bolognese and pesto. Being Italy, the food was universally very good to excellent, with rural hotels holding their own in quality to the finest restaurants in Florence. Vegetarians found it easy to adapt, as Julie made sure the hotel kitchen knew their special needs.

While one may enjoy the enchanting beauty of Italy and the friendliness of the Italian people without any pre-trip preparation, the bicycling is more enjoyable if you are in good shape at the start of the tour. (You don't have to be as fit as a rider in the Giro d'Italia, but you are well advised to ride your local hills hard to prepare for the green hills of Tuscany.)

Participants: Ida Nystrom, Stogs Stogsdill, Tom Leever, Claire Haddock, Susie Stogsdill, Russell Haddleton, Jim Nystrom, Carlie Geer, Stephen Petke, Suzanne Petke, Carole Milligan, Jack Dysart, Julie Leever, Frank MacFadden, Lois Williams, Tina Neil, Grace Voss, Don Eden, Gail Eden, Sandy Elmendorf, Richard Elmendorf, Steve Kelton, Pam Duckworth, Roger Johnson

Croatia and the Dalmatian Coast May 13th to May 27th
Ride Coordinator: Ronald Guidotti, Report by: Sandra Hall



22 Riders gathered in mid-May in Kraljevica, near the northern end of Croatia to ride coastal areas to Dubrovnik, at the southern end of the country. We rode on both the mainland and the islands, taking ferries to get from one land mass to another. The Croatian coast is very rocky and mountainous, some areas covered with lush vegetation and others bare and rocky. All rides start with a climb and few roads simply follow the coastline. All hotels were with ocean views which meant lots of up and down riding. Roads are narrow with no shoulder, so cars could be intimidating. Climbs are long (10 km the longest) and grades are 7 – 10%. We had a mixed group of cyclists from recumbents to tandems, including some bike Fridays. We saw old walled cities, many small, red roofed towns, agricultural fields, stone sheep fences, and consumed lots of calamari

and beer. Croatian people were friendly and helpful to lost cyclists and everyone arrived at the appointed stopping point each evening, ready to share stories and a beer.

Photo

First row: Jerry Pilver, Arlene Ellner, John Stephens, Gene Enders, Sandra Hall, Gordon Hall, Jo Ann Nicola

Second row: Kathy Sterling, Bob Newsom, Bill Keckler, Carole Shawver, Peg Enders, Bill Kudryk, Bob Lambert, Etienne (driver)

Third row: Chip Sterling, Steve Brown, Diane Brown, Rose Marie Lauser, John McCarthy, Dick Jones, Bob Dill, Judy Tiano, Jack Tiano
(not shown: Ron Guidotti, trip coordinator)

Participants: Ronald Guidotti, Chip Sterling, Diane Brown, Gordon Hall, Judy Tiano, Jo-ann Nicola, Peg Enders, Gene Enders, Steven Brown, Arlene Ellner, Bob Dill, Jack Tiano, Bo Newsom, Jere S Pilver, Kathy Sterling, John Stephens, William Keckler, William Kudryk, Carole Shawver, John McCarthy, Rose Marie Lauser, Sandra Hall, Bob Lambert, Richard Jones

Spring in Provence May 17th to June 1st

Ride Director: Lucy Glover, Report by: Kathleen Miller



Four books extol Provence's perched villages, fields of lavender, the rolling terrain, its Roman ruins. The participants of this bike tour will remember all of this and more: camaraderie, sunny weather, delightful accommodations and, for some, personal triumphs.

We bicycled in the sunny south. And it was sunny. Only on one day did some of the riders put on their rain gear. The early days were so warm that many riders gratefully used the pools at our various hotels. But "hotel is the misleading word: some accommodations were in hotels, one night we spent in a chateau, another in a renovated abbey (where we dined in a Romanesque refectory) and another couple nights in a "hostellerie, a series of three-centuries-old buildings perched in a walled city.

The route was structured to allow time for sightseeing both on and off the bikes. In the Luberon region we had one day which included visits to three perched villages, all complete with crumbling fortresses and churches and traffic free cobbled streets and wonderful views of the surrounding countryside. In Orange we had ample time to visit the very well preserved 2000 year old Roman theater. The day before Orange, our route took us past the amazing Pont du Gard. Another day's route took us through Roussillon, the Ochre City. Participants who strolled through the remarkable "Chaussee des Geants were strongly reminded of Bryce Canyon's hoodoos -- done in red. Toward the end of the trip we had a rest day in Arles and fully enjoyed the street market and the Roman arena and theater in this lovely city.

We bicycled along generally low-trafficked roads, along vineyards (Cote du Rhone), orchards (one young cherry orchard knee deep in red poppies!) and fields of wheat. The scene, viewed from the perched villages, was a patchwork of green and gold and red fields studded with honey beige and soft yellow brown colored houses with terra-cotta roofs. Flowers were everywhere, from massive plantings of roses or bougainvillea to tiny flowers on the sides of the road. The fragrance of aromatic herbs and flowers and the smell of new cut grass filled the air.

Our personal triumphs included, for some, finishing a first extended bike trip; for other, climbing Mt. Ventoux!

Closing the trip, two creative participants gave us a "departure treat when they presented each rider with a limerick or couplet and a small "award honoring each person for his/her idiosyncrasies or humorous situations that occurred on the trip. Great fun.

Participants: Seymour Katz, Ruth Haley, Randy Glover, Lucy Glover, Kathleen Miller, Paul Miller, Alfred Kahn, Roberta Kahn, Marlene Lippman, Fred Lippman, Roger Paluska, Sue Paluska, Fred Glover, Woody Van Gundy, Melinda Van Gundy, Phillip Wong, James Muellner, Marilyn Muellner, Elinor Katz, Renee Stoller, Norman Stoller, Donald Langmuir, Margery Langmuir, Wayne Haley, Arnie Henden, Shelly Henden

Discovering the Heart of Southern Italy May 29th to June 11th

Ride Coordinator: John Stephens, Report by: Ed Hass



Heart of Southern Italy – Basilicata:
May 29th – June 11th

Nine BAC members lead by John Stephens and Siciclano guide Giuseppe Crino zigzagged across the southern Italy province of Basilicata in early June. The ride was rate 3C, which seemed quite accurate. Daily riding was generally on lightly traveled roads with good to average surface and no shoulders. Italian drivers are generally very courteous to cyclists and the group encountered no significant motor vehicle incidents. We averaged nearly 60 miles per day for 11 riding days and had one optional rest day in the middle of the tour. The terrain was hilly to mountainous most days but grades were generally a modest four to six percent. We occasionally encountered short sections exceeding 15 percent. Terrain ranged from

sea level to over 4000 feet with little flat riding.

Starting in Matera (about 50 miles inland from the Adriatic coast), we visited Venosa, Melfi, Castelmezzano, Tursi, Terranova, Viggianello and Maratea (on the Tyrrhenian coast) and many other smaller villages. Scenery was generally spectacular, wild flowers abundant, and the small medieval villages seemed like they popped out of a storybook. Few town folk we encountered spoke English, but were always eager to assist and please visitors. Accommodations were three star . Food and wine were generally local and excellent. In Basilicata, they certainly know how to cook and dine. It was always easy to find a local bar or "supermercato to purchase a wonderful, inexpensive fresh panini lunch and drink, and fresh local ingredients and homemade pasta were common at dinner. This trip, or a shorter version, could easily become a staple of the BAC.

Since this trip was a trial run for this region of Italy, route design had been contracted out to local guides, but not necessarily experienced touring cyclists. Cue sheets were often less than optimal in the beginning days, but improved throughout the trip due to much hard work by Giuseppe.

Weather was generally cool in the mornings and moderate in the afternoons. We experienced light to moderate rain on a few days. Late May and early June appears to be a good time to visit Basilicata.

The one downside of the trip was the relative difficulty in getting to the start (Matera) and exiting from the end (Maratea). Both places required multiple transfers to and from the USA and added significant expense to the estimated basic price of the tour (which was very reasonable).

BAC members John Stephens (Santa Fe, NM), Ron Guidotti (Minden, NV), Bill Keckler (San Jose, CA), Bob McCullough (Saint Helena, CA), Dan Telep (New Hope, PA), Laura Telep (San Francisco, CA), Ed Hass & Karen Hass (Reston, VA) and Paul Braithwaite (Kentish Town, London) all thoroughly enjoyed the trip.

Participants: Ed Hass, Robert McCullough, Paul Braithwaite, John Stephens, William Keckler, Ronald Guidotti, Karen Hass, Daniel Telep, Laura Telep

Neckar Valley Tour June 23rd to July 8th

Ride Director: Richard Cocks, Report by: Richard Cocks



The trip up the Neckar River Radweg (bike trail) followed by the jaunt east along the Kocker and Jagst river Radwegs was fun, memorable, scenic and wet. It rained 12 of the 14 days of riding, although only a few times hard enough to cause us to stop and take shelter. According to the locals, it was unusually wet while we were there, but I suspect that the weather there is similar to Oregon or other green places. Mostly wet. We started in Southwest Germany in Schweningen at the origin of the mighty Neckar and ended in Heidelberg where the river is more than 300 feet wide. We averaged 35 miles per day with one rest day. The riding was mostly flat with one long hilly day. Along the way, we passed through many picturesque German villages with miles and miles of beautiful green fields, forests, and vineyards.

There was a great deal of public art and the bridges over the rivers were interesting, all being different. Some were quite artistic in design and color. They were strictly bike/pedestrian bridges, indicating Germany's commitment to its bicyclists.

The hotels along the trails really did cater to the bike crowd. They had plaques on the outside advertising "Bett and Bike". Most offered secure garages for our bikes.

The trails were 90 percent paved and usually alongside the river. At times, we diverted onto the streets of a village, but then quickly back to the river-side trail again. It was pastoral and green and very scenic.

There were 14 of us wet and wily riders, most from the USA, and two from Canada. We rode an assortment of bikes. There were 3 Bike Fridays, 6 coupled bikes, one tandem, and one mountain bike among us. We rode over 400 miles of trail and into quite a few pastry shops.

We used the Bikeline Guide books to find our way along the well marked Radwegs. Germany is a land of bikes. The people there use them extensively. The people in Germany were very friendly, the inns impeccably clean and most people spoke English, so traveling there was quite easy. The major towns we passed through were Heidelberg, Stuttgart and Schwabisch Hall. Many, many of the buildings are of the old half timber style and very charming. Seldom did we see a building in need of maintenance. In Stuttgart, we stopped to visit the Mercedes Benz museum. It was quite something with all kinds of imaginative exhibits. There were Benz' mounted on the walls and interactive displays.

We saw barges plying the Neckar toting scrap metal and gravel. We ate in Heidelberg at an American café named Andy's and stayed in the old town on the Hauptstrasse (head street or main street). There, we toured the old castle and walked the Philosopher's Walk. Heidelberg is a wonderful city with bike lanes on the sidewalks and special, street crossing lanes for them as well.

We did find that Germany was behind in two areas—smoking and graffiti! Lots of people there smoke, it is omnipresent and graffiti abounds. It was odd to find that much graffiti in such an orderly, tidy country.

The breakfasts that were included at all our hotels were generous and appreciated. For dinners we found pork to be very popular, followed by beef and veal. Some regions specialized in "their" type of sausage.

We also enjoyed those high latitude early mornings and late evenings with the sun rising at about 4:15 and setting at 9:45.

I think most of us agree this would be a trip worth repeating.

Participants: Richard Cocks, Jim Beattie, Ruth Klonizchii, Amy Rust, Lisa Loomis, Linda Reisinger, Lib Rust, Kristin Cocks, Jennifer Hocking, Roy Jordan, Robert Yee, Sandra Vours, Steve Teng, Leslie Train

St. Petersburg to Warsaw 2007, via the Baltic Countries August 4th to August 25th

Ride Coordinator: Guy Carrier, Report by: Martha Neville



This ride introduced a new format in unusual places to BAC participants! We covered a vast amount of territory and 5 different countries..Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. Therefore, our leader, Guy Carrier, and the commercial operator, Super Tours, conceived of a plan to use a bus for transport and a combination of touring by bus and on our bicycles. We had excellent guides for our walking tours in each country capital which provided a depth of detail into the history and the culture of each place far greater than we would have been able to gain on our own. St. Petersburg was a marvel of canals, museums, golden palaces, and the largest art collection in the world at the Hermitage (yes, even more than the Louvre!).

The bike riding included routes along the

Baltic Sea, through picturesque villages and towns, along parks and byways, and through the beautiful, rolling hills of Poland. But not in Russia! The traffic in St. Petersburg is ferocious and terrifying with dubious road surfaces. We started riding once we had crossed the border into Estonia at Narva. None of us will forget the border crossing out of Russia –it was long and wearing. We all applauded when we were actually into Estonia! We had 2 leaders as we biked each day so we had no cue sheets (although maps were available). Throughout each day, the bus would sweep the course and pick up any who needed a lift. This provided a lot of flexibility for the riders. The ride was accurately rated. Leadership was just fine and our Super Tour leaders took good care of us.

The Baltic Countries (never the Baltic States!) endured many sad and oppressive times which were difficult to hear about. However, each one is fiercely proud of its unique identity as a country and each does indeed have a different feel. When their independence was won in the 1990's, a human chain was forged hand by hand throughout the Baltic Countries consisting of 2 million people –a third of the entire population of these countries! There is a special tile in the cathedral square in Vilnius, Lithuania, of which no one will tell you the exact location (it's bad luck). But you can find it if you are observant and watch for someone turning in a circle (to bring good luck). The human chain ended here.

The food was plentiful and good with excellent hot or cold borscht, salads, and pickled everything. Butter could be in short supply –we had an incident at one hotel where they could not give us butter in the evening because the practice was to have it only in the morning! There was some clinging to rules and regulations which seemed to be rather arbitrary! Hotels were fine with some more rustic than others, but all provided a great feel for the countryside. And of course there was lots of beer at good prices! Always welcome at the end of a long ride!

So we remember this fabulous 3 week ride for golden palaces, huge churches, vast monuments, varied history including dark times, storks in the fields, friendly people, prosperous Poland, and an incredible richness of cultures. It was a great learning experience as well as a beautiful ride. The participants were Guy Carrier (leader and coordinator), Stephen and Linda Kiel, Georgann and Joe Hitzel, Ken and Liz Eden, Leo and Marianne Weiss, Stephen Chandler, Travis and Claire Russell, Jack and Terri Stitt, Karl and Lucette Glackmeyer, and Ken and Martha Neville.

Participants: Guy Carrier, Stephen Kiel, Ken Neville, Martha Neville, Stephen Chandler, Joseph Hitzel, Georgeann Hitzel, Kenneth Eden, Elizabeth Eden, Karl Glackmeyer, Lucette Glackmeyer, Travis Russell, Claire Russell, Marianne Weiss, Leo Weiss, unk Stitt, Terri Anderson, Linda Kiel