

Run To The North Wall, Sunday, July 16, 2000 by Gary D. Moore (mrr@gmasw.com)

The alarm sounded at 6:00 a.m. The Michigan sky was hazy much like my eyes at that hour on a weekend morning. Quick shower and light breakfast... then, on the road by 7:10 a.m. It was humid and moderately cool...64 degrees in Port Huron. There was light traffic heading South (West) on I-94. Warning signs of a detour at Woodward Ave were untrue. Cruised right through the area. The maiden trip through Detroit on my new 2000 Fat Boy was uneventful, but grand.

Arrived at the restaurant on Telegraph in 70 minutes. Beat my Michigan Rolling Thunder Chapter 3 friends. Food was good. Conversation centered on the events of the day. Bills paid and off to the staging site at VVA Chapter 259 (Down River Chapter) off Eureka and Telegraph. Over a hundred bikes in the parking lot along with several Taylor City Police cars and motorcycles. We all registered for the Bridge (to Canada) crossing. Picked up a pin for Glide and me. The chaps and jacket came off and packed for the remainder of the run.

The President of VVA Chapter 259 gave brief instructions about the ride to the Detroit (DVA) Vet Center. The chaplain said a prayer. At 10:00 a.m. the Taylor Police escorted the group. A Michigan State police wiped around and drove like a crazy man. About a mile or so on I-75 (North) he pulled over a ride who was not wearing a helmet. To each his own with the brain bucket, but that cop should have gotten a ticket for reckless driving. Other than that, the ride was relatively trouble free...one bike pulled off with trouble...the President of VVA Chapter 259. Bad gas.

The Detroit Vet Center circle drive was full. Michigan Rolling Thunder Chapter 3 made room for the new arrivals (they arrived earlier). Customs paper work got shuffled and reviewed. We stood in line again to submit crossing information, and get a numbered dot to cross the Ambassador Bridge. Hurry up and wait was something the vets understood.

The Detroit City Police joined the City of Taylor Police at the Vet Center. The signal was given. We were off. The route wandered through streets of Detroit that I had not driven in years. A beautiful sight on Woodward...the new Tiger's Stadium. The Tiger ball game crowd stood on the edge of Woodward to watch the parade of bikes. It was fun.

Finally, the Bridge. We crossed without stopping. The weather was warm and humid. The arrival in Canada slowed us a bit. A bus with disabled veterans lead the group at a slow pace for the several miles outside of Windsor to Saint Clair College.

Our buddy (CC), met us at the college parking lot. A lot of bikes from around Canada and the U.S. were there...many arrived early that morning. Barely getting enough time to park...more instructions...this time by Ed Johnson. Prayer for the group again. Departing the lot was slow but without incident for approximately 1500 bikes plus a bus.

Not having a clue as to how we were to get to our destination at the park along the beautiful St Clair River...we just enjoyed the ride. The people came to the edge of the streets on our route. They smiled and waved. It was a mini Rolling Thunder Run, but in Canada.

We arrived at the North Wall monument along the river. Parking was at a premium. Someone volunteered his front lawn. (Some nice people live in Canada.) I talked to a couple bikers about their nice looking Hooker pipes (bikers always like to talk about their rides). The pipes would look great on my bike.

Pictures taken and greetings for several friends that I had not seen in a long time, namely, Ed and Rick. The ceremony was an excellent tribute. We paid homage our fallen Canadian brothers. A veteran event is not complete without reference to those who still wait to learn the fate of their loved ones...those listed as POW/MIA. We remember and honor them, too.

Good byes and hugs at the end of the ceremony. The ride home was rainy (cold and hard) for most of the journey, but the events of the day was worth getting wet. It was a great day for a ride!