

Subj: **Brian and Gertrude seek warm weather (I)**
Date: 6/20/2006 6:26:08 PM Pacific Standard Time
From: [BrianLaine](#)
To: fritz.drach@fredmeyer.com, chances_grandpa@verizon.net, [Manningdesign](#), dwh@hughes.net, [Majava500](#), [XRBen](#), emily.k.thorpe@wamu.net, [RachelC246](#), [Ole1975](#), [ReanLaine](#)

Hello all,

This is just miscellaneous boring ramblings, so please feel free to delete away if you have a real life.

Gert and I headed out Friday morning, heading south. Friday afternoon and night were a nice time to visit with Mom in Portland, and Rachel came over to help me celebrate an early Father's Day. The weather was generally clear, but a few cloudbursts along the way made sure that all the cleaning I'd done on Gert was immediately undone.

Saturday morning I headed south in nice clear weather for Medford. There I met Daryl, my old motorcycling Navy Chief from the Navy. We had spend many great weekends in the early seventies motorcycling around California, and his wonderfully understanding wife, Martha, let him loose again with me, he on his new Kawasaki Mean Streak 1500 cruiser. Daryl now lives in Napa California and this is sort of a 35th anniversary cruise for us. We aren't quite as svelte and wild these days, just a couple of old farts hitting the rack early.

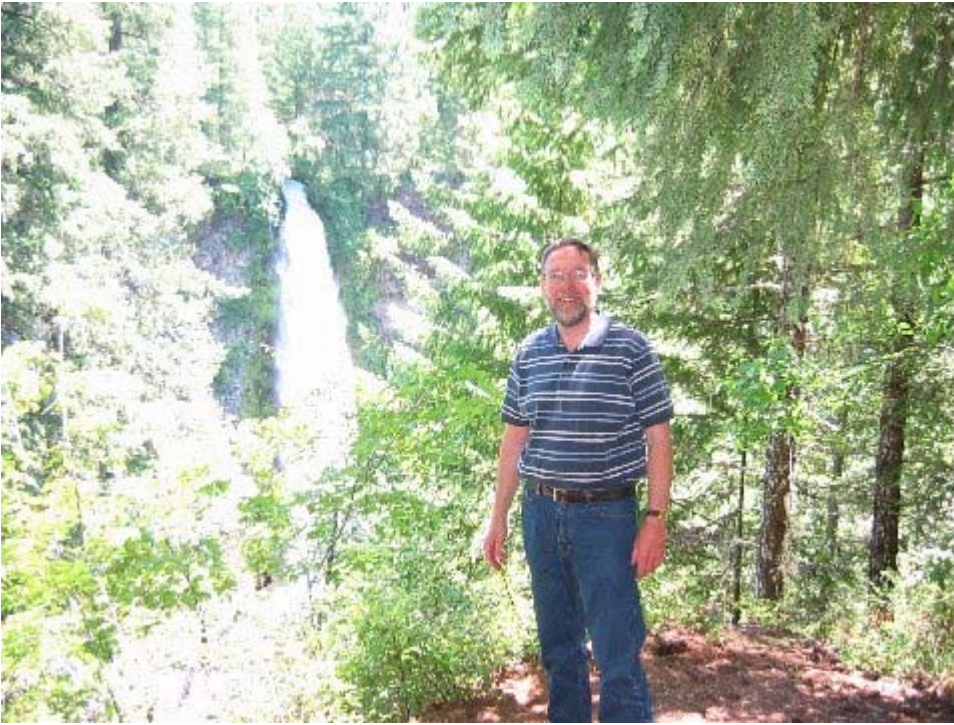


Before leaving Medford, we attended a car show, and I was most intrigued by the Mexican small-wheeled low riders with hydraulics allowing the cars to literally jump off the ground, among other acrobatics. The trunk of these cars are literally full of batteries and hydraulic pumps, and must be hauling around about 1000 pounds in the trunk. Much as this isn't my bag of tea, I have to admire the design and craftsmanship that goes into these cars.

We then headed north east up towards Crater Lake. Beautiful ride through the mountains, and soon there was snow everywhere. Of course I have to include the obligatory picture or two, but I have to say I'm not doing much of a photography job. Since its been hot, either the subjects are in the shade so you can't see them, or there's a snow background which also drives the exposure nuts. The lake even has ice still floating around.



On the way, we actually did a short hike to Miller Falls, which is 173 feet high. Daryl described the hike as 1/2 mile down, and a mile back up, but I think it was further back than that.



After leaving Crater Lake, we headed towards Klamath Falls, where we spent Sunday night. Very nice town, where we had a nice chat with a local group consisting of father and son and their wives. The father was 91, and told us tales of his old bikes he rode in the 30s and 40s. He had a great memory, e.g., "I loved that old thirty-fifty Harley, that's a 500 single you know...." The son was a motorcyclist too, but the wives soon dragged them off. I think our talk was the best part of his Father's Day personally. Great old guy. Daryl, at 68, is a spring chicken by comparison.

From Klamath Falls we headed towards Reno. The road into Susanville was wonderful, winding roads through the pine forests with almost no traffic - the ideal road. We found a hotel right downtown in Reno for only \$49. It was very sophisticated, the big sign outdoors even stressed "credit cards accepted." It really wasn't all that bad. It turns out that Daryl's wife and daughter were in town at the same time, so we had dinner and breakfast with them. I don't know if it was fair for Daryl to have a spousal visit during the trip, but he promised not to come back to our hotel room whistling and smoking a cigarette. I wandered over to Circus Circus and walked away with fifteen of their hard earned bucks; they will probably put me on the list of predators to keep out in the future.

Being in Nevada with Gert does let me check that off the list. Last summer we hit all the western states and provinces except Nevada.

Tuesday morning, we proceeded South, with the idea that we would visit the Grand Canyon. It got hotter and hotter, so we decided to revise our plans at about Coleville, and head back North to see if we could find some cooler weather. So we took a different route and headed toward Fallon Nevada. Neither of us had been there, although we had both taken a lot of pilots there in flight simulators during our Navy days. There's a practice bombing range there, and it looks a lot different from the ground than it does on a military radar screen. We can now see why they located it there, if a bomb landed in the wrong place, there isn't much to lose, in fact it might improve things. After leaving Fallon (still plenty hot, it was 98 there), we continued north to Lovelock (not to worry Chris!) for the night. We are staying at the "Covered Wagon Hotel with WiFi." Hmm. Because of the about-face, after leaving Reno this morning, we found ourselves only 40 miles away from Reno after riding for 4 1/2 hours. We thought about riding back to Reno again, but I don't think their economy can handle another visit from me.

We're thinking of wandering into Boise next. Decent weather and a BMW dealer there since Gert's tires are getting a bit thin. For those of you who aren't bikers, these bikes go through tires in under ten thousand miles, and they cost as much or more than good car tires. I suppose the wear rate is from softer rubber for better traction. I'll accept that tradeoff happily.

Well, if you're still awake, I'll sign off and let you know how things are going later in the trip should time permit.

Regards,

Dad/Brian

Subj: **Brian and Gertrude seek warm weather (II)**
Date: 6/23/2006 7:41:02 PM Pacific Standard Time
From: [BrianLaine](#)
To: [MarkLaine](#), stingray@foxinternet.com, fritz.drach@fredmeyer.com, chances_grandpa@verizon.net, [Manningdesign](#), dwh@hughes.net, [Majava500](#), [XRBen](#), emily.k.thorpe@wamu.net, [RachelC246](#), [Ole1975](#), [ReanLaine](#)

Hello all,

Just thought I'd give you a quick update in case you have some time to waste.

Since the last report, we headed to Boise from Lovelock Nevada. It was nice to get away from the freeway and take Hwy 95. As we got close to Boise, the traffic got heavier and heavier, I think we can take Boise out of the small city category. We rolled in late in the day and found that there was a soccer meet going on, so all the hotels were full. We finally found a room near the airport, but they weren't exactly discounting the rooms.

Thursday morning Gert and I found the BMW dealer and got Gert outfitted with new tires, a good feeling when you are out in these hot, open roads, especially with the 75 MPH speed limits. It's interesting how speed limits vary so much state to state. On one road (Hwy 95), it was identical conditions on the whole road, however the speed limit in Nevada was 70, Oregon 55, and Idaho 75. Its nice having the radar detector since it was a little nerve wracking to be going with the flow of traffic in Oregon at 70, knowing that you could get picked off at any time. It did alert us a couple of times.

From Boise, we found some back roads leading out of town and headed northwest. We decided that we would head for Baker City Oregon since that's the most likely town to have a hotel within some distance. Along the way, the GPS told us to turn off the freeway and headed us off on some back roads leading in the wrong direction. Since I've been trained to always listen to and obey a female voice by Chris, we followed the advice and had an interested side trip. Daryl thinks that I deleted the end point and it was directing us back to the via point from half a day earlier, but that couldn't happen to a high tech guy like me, could it? I cycled her power and she started thinking straight again (look out Chris, you're next), and all seems well again.

Baker city is a very pretty town in the mountains with a historical theme. We want to go through central Oregon on some secondary roads, so this is a good start. We found a charming little non-chain hotel with continental breakfast for \$35/night. The Asian woman (see, I'm learning Emily - I didn't call her Oriental) running the place told us that we might find blondes in our room left from the previous night, but we weren't so lucky. I think Chris must have been talking to her to eliminate that option.

The weather has been sunny, and if anything a little on the warm side. I've been able to wear a short sleeved shirt all day, and that probably explains the sunburn. Today we stopped at a fishing site along the Snake River, and it felt really good to submerge our shirts then put them back on. It made it nice and cool for quite a while. A guy fishing there claimed he was fishing for catfish, and some had been caught up to 40 pounds. Looking at his surrounds, I think he was catching a lot more beer than catfish.

We had a delightful ride from Boise to Redmond Oregon today. The roads are all beautiful and curvy through the pine forests. Roads something like this, but many sections are curvier yet:



This is all along the original Oregon trail, so it's interesting to think about the pioneers traversing this same territory. We took Hwy 7 from Baker City down to Hwy 26 heading west.

First thing this morning we rode along with a couple of women, one on a Kawasaki Concours, the other on a Honda 500 Shadow. Don't worry Chris and Martha, I think they liked women better than men. At any rate, the one on the Concours was complaining about how the front forks on her bike started to make some handle bar vibration about 100, then it got pretty bad about 120. She was waiting until it was fully broken in before she tried faster.

Later in the day we rode with a different group of guys who were making very good time through the mountains, so I enjoyed sticking with them. An unlikely group, a metric cruiser, a sport bike, and a Gold Wing. I was impressed by the speeds the Gold Wing could maintain through the corners.

We then stopped for lunch/dinner combo in Prineville. When I rolled into the diner, I heard a bunch of clunking noises coming from the front end of the bike. I looked down and found that the brake caliper was just hanging there, and the front fender flapping in the breeze. As it turns out, when they put the new tires on in Boise, they must have forgotten to tighten the bolts, and several were gone. After thinking about the consequences should this have happened earlier at relatively high speeds through the mountains, I can see some serious letter writing to BMW once I return is in order. Since Prineville is so small (less than 10,000 people), we wondered where we would find metric bolts the right size. Out of pure luck, Daryl noticed an ad in the Chinese restaurant for an industrial supply store in the outskirts of Prineville, so we were able to find suitable replacements until I get home and can get the correct ones.

Outside the diner, we chatted with this friendly couple, see if you can guess what kind of bike they were riding:



You were probably wrong, it was a Honda Gold Wing. LeeRoy, you better get some different attire for you bike so you will fit in! Too bad you're married, this woman would be a fine catch.

Since I have an odd sense of humor, and had recently been in Reno, this sign along the way tickled me. It was like the light on a slot machine or pinball machine when luck was running your way:



After rolling into Prineville, we also found that almost all the hotel rooms were full, and ended up with one of questionable quality. Better than camping though, and lots of Mexican restaurants nearby.

Our plans change from hour to hour, this way you can't be late or lost when you don't know where you're going. I think we might head over to the Oregon Coast next though, it might be a little cooler. It's even warm for Daryl, and he's from sunny California.

If I don't get home in the next few days, I'll keep you posted on progress.

Regards,

Brian/Dad

Subj: **Brian and Gertrude seek warm weather (III)**
Date: 6/27/2006 11:55:25 AM Pacific Standard Time
From: [BrianLaine](#)
To: [MarkLaine](#), [stingray@foxinternet.com](#), [fritz.drach@fredmeyer.com](#), [chances_grandpa@verizon.net](#), [Manningdesign](#), [dwh@hughes.net](#), [Majava500](#), [XRBen](#), [emily.k.thorpe@wamu.net](#), [RachelC246](#), [Ole1975](#), [ReanLaine](#)

Hello surrogate travelers,

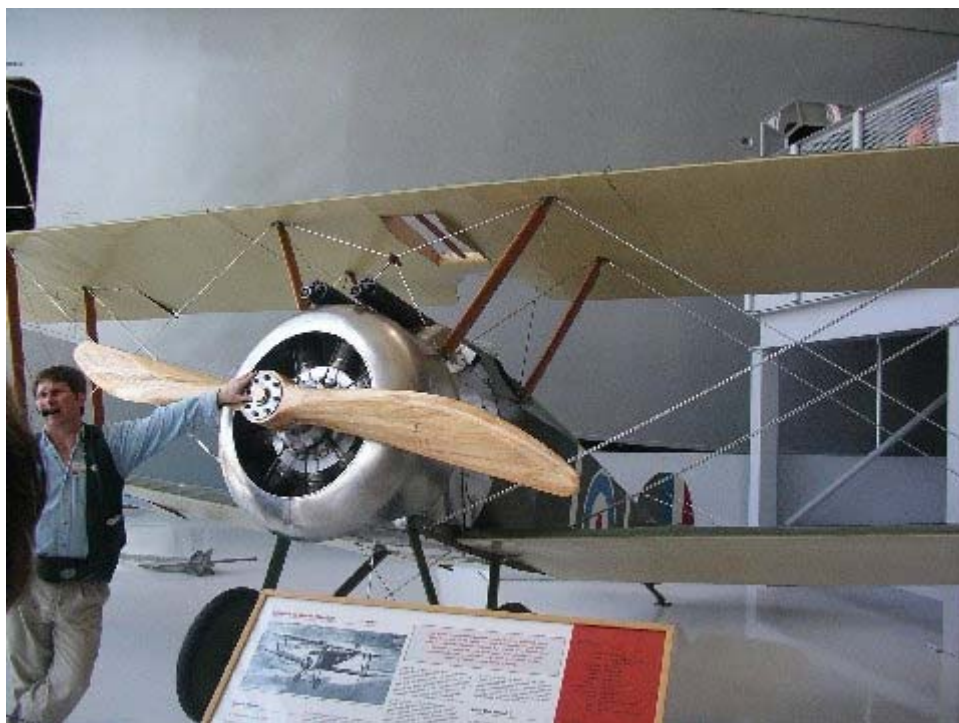
Just thought I'd give you an end-of-trip report if you have a little time to waste.

After leaving Redmond Oregon, the weather was hot so we made a short, but nice ride to McMinnville Oregon. By the way, my last email from the seedy hotel in Redmond, which had no Internet access at all, was via some bodies WiFi in the area that they were nice enough to leave unsecured.

We toured through Amity and up through the Willamette Valley's wine country where it was about 100 degrees, above the threshold where pleasant heat turns into a blast furnace effect.

Saturday we toured the Evergreen Aviation museum in McMinnville, where Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose now resides. It has a fuselage the same size as a 747, but a longer wingspan, and it likely to be the largest aircraft ever flown, even the new Airbus jumbo has a shorter wingspan by about 20'. Evidently, even with eight 3,000 HP engines, the power is marginal, with a power to weight ratio about 1/5 of a 747.

There were a number of other interesting aircraft there, such as the SR 71 spy plane, MIGs, Mustangs, ... and even a Sopwith Camel (like Snoopy's plane). It is interesting in that it is tiny (only 18' long), and for you gear heads, is interesting mechanically. As you know, most planes have the crankcase attached to the bulkhead, and propeller attached to the crankshaft. However, this plane is the opposite, with the cylinders spinning around and the crankshaft attached to the bulkhead. This leads to an interesting problem since the reciprocating mass is so high, it creates a gyroscopic effect. Consequently, the plane, when turned hard left would literally go out of control and turn upside down. Most military planes have a 1:1 ratio of non-combat vs combat crashes, but this plane is 4:1, extremely hard to fly. Interesting to think about how the intake and exhaust works on an engine configuration like this. Here's a picture:



And this is the SR 71, this is the last one ever flown. Evidently from 80,000 feet, the pictures it takes are vivid enough so

that you can read the headlines on a newspaper someone is reading. The analog camera exceeds the capabilities of digital cameras of today.



You can see the Spruce Goose looming above it. Great museum if you are aviation oriented, highly recommended.

From McMinnville, we wandered down to Corvallis, home of my Alma Mater, Oregon State University. Had a nice walk through the beautiful campus. Concurrently OSU was in the CWS (college world series), so there was a lot of excitement about that. We were able to watch all the games and enjoyed the successful outcome.

Monday, I blasted home up I-5 on a hot-hot day (100+ some of the way). Along the way, I noticed the following at a rest stop. Evidently they had installed an elaborate device to discourage swallows from nesting, but the hornets decided it was a great place to start a nest - hard to discourage all of nature's beings:



All in all a most pleasant trip. Daryl was a great traveling companion, and we covered about 2500 miles. No bike problems (other than mechanic's errors mentioned previously), and we both hovered at about 50 MPG. Nice to be home again though.

Until the next trip....

Brian/Dad