

# Lecture: Motorcycle trip through Alaska

Sketches 7

with Don Kemp

Monday, September 22, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

Gualala Arts Center

Don says it best, “In college I rode what was called a Sears Moped; it had pedals like a bicycle and a small 50 cc engine. In graduate school, I bought a Honda 90 cc scooter, called a Monkey, to get around since my wife needed the car to go to work. After graduate school my life became way too dignified to ride motorcycles, and besides I had family who depended on me; so motorcycle riding was out of bounds for safety reasons. Therefore, I went “cycleless” from 1974 until 2004, when I bought my current motorcycle.

“During those 30 years I had repeatedly fantasized about buying a large motorcycle and riding it across the US; that trip became one of the things on my “Bucket List.” After moving to the Sonoma Mendocino Coast in 2001, I started seeing people cruising up and down Highway 1 looking quite civilized; at least many of them looked quite civilized. It occurred to me that if I was ever going to scratch that coast-to-coast ride off of my Bucket List, I had better get working on it. So I bought my current motorcycle, a Goldwing 1800 ABS, in late 2004.

“I soon realized that this was an altogether different animal than the bikes I had ridden 30 years earlier; it had 20 times the horse power and 10 times the weight. However, after two crashes, scaring the heck out of myself many many times, a series of safety modifications to the bike, three different Motorcycle Training Schools and a lot of practice I began to feel that I was getting a sense of control.

“In 2006 I took my Bucket List trip across the US and back; I rode 11,000 miles in 46 days on that trip. I enjoyed it so much that I started thinking of what else I could do for an encore. Alaska beckoned. That’s what this talk will be all about. Altogether I rode 10,400 miles in 36 days on this trip. I went all over Alaska, even up North of the Arctic Circle on the infamous “Haul Road” that runs along side of the Alaska Pipeline; and in the process encountered all kinds of weather and road conditions. But, oh what a great adventure for me! I will show those attending what equipment I used, how I prepared and share what it was like.”

A \$5 donation is requested.

