



Michigan Sport Touring Report

December 2018

Editor – Rachel Durling

An Adventure of Opportunities – The Story of my 2018 Historic Courthouse Tour

By Glen Feldpausch

It was with eager anticipation that I reviewed the subject of the 2018 Grand Tour. Last year, I visited all of the sites, and for 2018, I was determined to again to visit all sites and include as many extra credit stops as possible. My plans included adding more Historic Courthouses in the state and outside of the state of Michigan.

A Fun Summer Ride during a Break in the Heat

Since the wife was away babysitting grand kids in Colorado, I had time to spend riding to the courthouses in the southern part of the state. On a cool day in July, looking for curvy back roads, I visited Barry County Courthouse (Hastings) for checkpoint 3. This visit included breakfast at Phil's Galley in Hastings. I can report that the eastern omelet is good and worth consideration. The interesting thing about Phil's is that it has a nautical theme but there is no significant body of water nearby unless you count the Thornapple River.

Next was the Van Buren Courthouse in Paw Paw, checkpoint 2. It was just a brief visit, then off to the Lenawee County Courthouse in Adrian, check point 1. There was not much to report in these stops. From there, a visit to one of my favorite stores in Ann Arbor, Adventures in HomeBrew for some beer supplies then home after visiting these first stops.

Lost Opportunity

In August, I was to travel to Colorado to watch over my 8 year old granddaughter in Denver. While planning the route out west, I could see that US Highway 18 from about Madison WI west could be a pleasant ride. It then occurred to me that there HAD to be a number of Historic Courthouses in Wisconsin, Iowa, and South Dakota on that route. A little searching confirmed my thoughts. Historic Courthouses that are on the National Registry could be found along the way. Highway 18 is one of those pleasant American highways that winds its way across the heartland. I stopped at four sites on the way. Unfortunately, I misplaced the photos of every one of the Courthouses that I visited. A lost opportunity but I was able to visit the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre near the town of Wounded Knee. This is a historical site that remembers an event that is considered embarrassing to the government. Unfortunately, since it's embarrassing to the government, they aren't doing anything to observe it; it isn't much of a site. It is funded by the native Indians of the area.

Last Ride before Europe

The Gratiot County Courthouse in Ithaca was the next stop. This was to occur just days before my wife and I were to go to Europe for a 2 week ride in the Alps. My understanding was that our R1200GS would not have a top box and backrest. This was concerning as my wife has never ridden in the last decade without a backrest/top box. After getting the photo, lunch was had at the Hearthstone restaurant, a pleasant restaurant featuring home-cooked, comfort food in ample portions. Taking the long way home, confirmed to my wife that she really

needs a backrest. As a result (unbeknownst to me), she made her needs known to our tour company, Beach MC Adventures. As a result, I found that my GS in Germany had a top box and my wife was a happy camper during our tour.

Time to wrap up the Tour - An Adventure with Weather

After returning from Europe, there was a lot of catch-up to do (which is funny because I thought I was retired). As September rolled into October, I realized that I had to get the last of the stops of the tour done soon. The first 2 weeks of October were pleasant and perfect for a ride to complete the task but I was too involved in projects at home. Soon enough, it was the middle of the month and reports were out that peak U.P. color was to be on the weekend of October 13-14th. Not wanting to share the roads with the weekend warriors, I postponed my departure a few more days and planned to leave home on October 15th. Unfortunately, I was pushing my good weather luck.



With an eye on the weather radar, I left home on the 15th and headed to Ludington and the Mason County Courthouse. The ride was okay, catching some curves and in and out of rain. Arriving near lunchtime, I refueled at the Sportsman Irish Pub in Ludington where I had a pleasant lunch. The weather by now was clear, but windy and getting cooler. The next stop was checkpoint 6 in Bellaire and the Antrim County Courthouse. Some rain had returned and the temperatures hovered around 40 degrees. After that stop and grateful for

heated gear, it was off to Alpena and checkpoint 7 in Alpena County.

MI Highway 32 could make for a pleasant curving road across the state but on an unsettled weather day, it became an adventure. Shortly after crossing I-75, I saw that I was riding into a wall of white. Soon I was riding in snow and the temperature was dropping. With the temperatures hovering at 32 degrees, heavy snow was falling and collecting on the bike, trees and grass. Fortunately, it all melted on the road. Pressing on, I soon arrived in Alpena and collected the photographic evidence of my visit. Then it was onto Cheboygan and the end of the day.

With the sun and temperatures falling, I knew that I needed to push the speed limit to get to Cheboygan for the evening. I was feeling okay; my core was warm though my legs were cold. Heated jacket, heated seat and grips were making the ride safe. Unfortunately, I pushed the speed limit too far and one fine member of our State Police 'requested' that I stop for a moment.

It pays to be honest with an officer. When asked how fast I was going, I answered truthfully, there is no sense in lying as he knows darn well how fast I was going. When asked where I was going, I responded Cheboygan, in a chattering voice. What was happening is that while I was plugged into the bike, my core kept warm. As soon as I stopped and unplugged, the cold blood in my legs flowed into my body and I got cold real fast. The officer was beyond nice, he asked me to slow down and no performance award was received. Within the hour, I was in Cheboygan and spent the evening in an overpriced flee bag motel downtown. It only took a couple of hours to warm up.

Driving around in the Soo

The next morning was calm but cold. Gathering the photo of checkpoint 8, it was then off to the Bridge and to the Soo. Not long after leaving CP8, I came across the 'World Famous Pancake Chef' Restaurant. It has to be World

Famous, because the billboard on the side of the road said so. I had a great breakfast and was soon on the road again. I was headed across the Bridge and soon in the Soo for checkpoint 9, Chippewa County Courthouse in Sault St Marie. While there, I visited the 'Historic Water Street'. More info on Water Street is here:

<http://www.saulthistoricsites.com/water-street-historic-block/>.

Nearby, is the Tower of History.

The Tower is a tribute to the areas early missionaries, and explorers. It offers a good view of the area and locks.

<http://www.saulthistoricsites.com/tower-of-history/>.

From there it was off to checkpoint 10, Menominee Courthouse in Menominee. Before that though, I rode a little way for a stop at the Racoon Airfield. Before WWII, Racoon Field was built to be an airport for the Soo Locks. Since then it has had a mixed history of use and currently is used by the major auto companies for winter testing.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racoon_Airfield.

Traversing the U.P

Now, it was time to just tell the Garmin GPS to get me to Menominee and then hours later I arrived. By now the weather was decent for riding in the UP in October, the temps climbed into the 50's. Somewhere I got some food and coffee, and then off to Dickinson County Courthouse and checkpoint 10 in Iron Mountain, then the County Courthouse in Crystal Falls, checkpoint 12.

The roads became interesting from Menominee to Iron Mountain to Crystal Falls. With the Garmin set to pick 'curvy roads', I had a pleasant time chasing good, curving roads. That's something to look at this winter after I download that route. With the sun setting, it was to Ishpeming for an overnight stay with relatives and some craft beer pubs.

The Adventure with Weather

The next morning, I looked out the window and saw snow. Okay, that is fine there is snow on the grass but then I noticed that the snow was sticking on the road. That is not okay. Looking at the weather reports and the radar, it looked dangerous to travel to Houghton and Bessemer for the last stops. I would have to travel through a weather front that was dropping snow. After some thought and coffee, I decided to give up the quest and head for home. Simply getting from the subdivision to the highway involved some 'pucker' as it was pretty much 'black ice' (got to love anti-lock brakes and traction control).



It was a good decision as I barely stayed ahead of the mentioned weather front on my way east across the UP. I stopped for a coffee break and when leaving, the front was on top of me. It all went completely bad after I crossed the Bridge. Looking for good coffee and some food, I found a Starbucks. There I watched the front sweep through, dropping rain, sleet and snow sideways. I waited for it to clear; I then

suited back up and headed downstate for home. Unfortunately I forgot that the front that just swept through was weather I had to then ride through. Fortunately, the roads were too warm for the snow to stick and although it was sleeting with snow collecting on the front of the bike, the roads were not slippery.

As I traveled, the heated jacket, seat and grips continued to keep my core warm, though my legs were cool. Within a few hours, I was home. It was there that the last effects of this adventure became clear. As I rode, my heated jacket was causing some hot spots on my back. Not unpleasant but I didn't want it to be any hotter. When home, I undressed and found that I had experienced 3rd and 2nd degree burns from the heated jacket. I didn't wear an extra layer over the heated jacket and the Aerostitch outer jacket. As a result, the long term contact to the heating elements caused some burning since it was turned relatively high. Another thing to log in the memory of the 'Adventure'.

Riding Below the Bridge – The Life of a Troll

By Ken Snodgrass

For the past 6 years, Keith Danielson has organized the MSTR Grand Tour, and like Keith, the tours are unique from other events because there is a goal beyond the ride itself. Keith has taken us to strange and unusual landmarks in hidden spots of our fair state and a few that are hiding in plain sight. After riding in a few tours, you develop sort of a pattern to your travel and a few roads become very familiar – M25 along Lake Huron in the Thumb, US23 from Tawas to the Mackinaw Bridge, M22 and US31 from Traverse City to Indiana, US12/Michigan Avenue across the state and my personal favorite, the Red Arrow Highway. For a bunch of reasons, I've only ventured across the mighty Mac once in pursuit of the tour objectives and, fortunately for me, Keith has

a special recognition for us riders of limited range and endurance: trolls.

Now like Keith, *troll* is a pretty interesting word: it can be used as a noun and verb and traces back to Middle English, Old Norse, and Middle High German. Here are the definitions from my dog-eared Webster's Dictionary, 1973 edition (Of course, the new use of the word in the internet/online era is not included here.)

1 *troll* \ˈtrɒl\ *vb* [ME *trollen*] *vt* **1** : to cause to move round and round : ROLL **2 a** : to sing the parts of (as a round or catch) in succession **b** : to sing loudly **c** : to celebrate in song **3** : to speak or recite in a rolling voice **4 obs** : to move rapidly : WAG **5 a** : to angle for with a hook and line drawn through the water **b** : to angle in (~ lakes) **c** : to pull through the water in angling (~ a lure) ~ *vi* **1** : to move around : RAMBLE **2** : to fish esp. by trolling a hook **3** : to sing or play in a jovial manner **4** : to speak rapidly — *troll-er* *n*
2 *troll* *n* **1** : a lure or a line with its lure and hook used in trolling **2** : a song sung in parts successively : ROUND
3 *troll* *n* [Norw *troll* & Dan *trolde*, fr. ON *troll* giant, demon; akin to MHG *trolle* monster, OE *treppan* to tread — more at TRAP] : a fabled dwarf or giant of Teutonic folklore inhabiting caves or hills

So when Keith refers to me as a troll, I'm sure he means a person who sings loudly, celebrates in song and moves rapidly and rambles not a dwarf who inhabits caves and hills. (But honestly Keith, I need to work on the singing part.) If you have made it this far, you're obviously facing a lull in the pace of your life, so perhaps you'll continue reading the following short accounts of my ongoing quest of the *Grand Tourer Certificate*.

2013 Michigan Dam Grand Tour!™



It may be a surprise to some, but there are a lot of dams in Michigan. Most rivers of any size (and we have a lot) have dams along their

entire run. Some are for flood control, some for power generation, and some are for both. Keith kept us in the Lower Peninsula this first year, which, as a newly returning rider, it was okay with me. With Michigan's square road grid, there was no way to cover checkpoints on the Au Sable (6 dams) or the Muskegon (5 dams) "as the crow flies." So it was back and forth, up and down as you traveled from one checkpoint to another on the same river. For some reason, the dams struck me as a little eerie, especially the hydro dams with the cracking and popping of the transformers and power lines and the throbbing noise of the generators. Just one question here Keith – does the TM symbol in the title have any significance?

2014 Michigan Fourteen Corners Grand Tour

While Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona share the Four Corners, this year Keith took us to the fourteen corners of Michigan, including 6 in the UP. Corners is a little of a misnomer since Michigan's outline is defined by points, bays and a few peninsulas. The Tour introduced me to 3 unique spots – Michiana, the Red Arrow Highway and the Lost Peninsula. I won't go on about them here, but check them out on the internet or, better yet, include them on an upcoming ride.



2015 Michigan Lighthouse Grand Tour!

One of the intriguing aspects of the Tour is that you come across spots which bring back old memories and adventures. Below is my lighthouse and near shipwreck story but it does not have anything to do motorcycling, so feel free to skip down to the next part.

Since I sailed on the Great Lakes for 40 years before returning to motorcycles, I've seen most all of the LP Tour lighthouses from the water. I had a harrowing incident on Lake Michigan near the Point Betsy Light, one of the checkpoints on the Tour. I was crewing on a boat in the Chicago Mackinaw Race and we were enjoying an exhilarating ride – the winds were from the SW blowing all the way from Chicago and we were flying up the lake with a spinnaker. The winds and waves grew as we approached Point Betsy during the 2nd night of the race and the helmsman struggled to keep the boat, which was pretty skittish, under the spinnaker to avoid a death roll and broach. The wind started to clock to the west and the light became bigger and brighter as we rocketed towards it in the dark. It soon became obvious that we were not going to clear Point Betsy and we'd have to jibe (turn) the boat back out into the lake. In order to avoid having things go real bad real quick, the boat had to be jibed quickly in the trough of the wave (where the boat slows down and is hidden from the wind) and the 6 crew members involved in the maneuver could not screw anything up. It was over in a flash – the helmsman deftly turned the boat down, the foredeck crew made the new guy and snapped the spinnaker pole back on the mast, the boom cracked across the cockpit and the boat shot forward towards the lake and South Manitou Island. The off watch crew went below as we crossed the paths of other boats setting up for their jibes. All's well that ends well.

2016 Michigan Life's a Beach Grand Tour

I often wonder how Keith selects one checkpoint over another. Michigan has a lot of lakes and a lot more beaches, so he had a lot to choose from. So how did he know I

have fond memories of Tawas and Sterling State Parks? Photographing your bike in your ATGATT is not what most people do at a beach, was Keith just messing with us? How about all of the beaches located on inland lakes? There are a lot of things to ponder as you loop both the Upper and Lower Peninsula for the 2016 tour.

2017 Michigan Deposed Depots Grand Tour

With the 2017 Tour, Keith turned us towards the back into the interior of state after 3 years of riding the shoreline. What was curious about the railroad depots was that the grander structures were in the more out of the way places such as Durand and Harrisville. This was the year I was going to UP in quest of full “Grand Tourer” standing. But there were a few wrinkles in my plan from the get go: at the checkpoint in Tecumseh my bike would not start – everything was dead. Fortunately my AMA membership paid for most of the tow home and the problem was a frozen starter solenoid which was easily fixed. Back on the road, I decided to include an around Lake Superior trip as part of my ride to the UP checkpoints. About a day out I started to have joint pains that I associated with a few strenuous activities before I left. It was only after a painful, sleepless night in the Sleeping Giant Provincial Park near Thunder Bay Ontario that I realized I was having a full blown re-occurrence of my autoimmune disease. So I turned around and headed back east to the Soo and then on to home where an Rx for the wonder drug Prednisone was waiting for me to ease my pain. So much for achieving Grand Tourer status this year. But I did learn it doesn’t matter which way you travel around the Big Lake – it is a glorious ride in either direction.

2018 Michigan Historic Courthouse Grand Tour

There was a time when public buildings – courthouses, schools, libraries, city halls – were a symbol of a city’s prosperity and

vitality. The bigger, more ornate and lavish the better. A big clock in a tall tower was part of the style of the day. Many of these buildings remain as an annex to simpler building where the important work now takes place. My goals for this year’s Grand Tour were stymied from the get go – I have a couple of medical issues that kept me off the bike. Keith’s rules stipulate a photo of your bike with the checkpoint in the background is required as evidence of visiting each checkpoint. Would a photo of a photo of my bike at a checkpoint count? As everyone knows, Keith is a straight up guy, so it wasn’t a sure thing he would accept my submission. But it wasn’t like I was photo shopping a photo of the bike into a photo of the checkpoint – the bike photo was actually there! I’ll learn my fate at the MSTR banquet in January.

2019 Grand Tour

Where will Keith take us in 2019? The possibilities are endless – rest areas/road side parks, bridges, statues, museums, and maybe even bars and restaurants. Perhaps we’ll venture into Detroit. I’m sure that I can speak for everyone who has participated in a Grand Tour that it is a rousing way to visit our great state. Thank you Keith – I’ve enjoyed every mile!



A special thanks to **Glen Feldpausch** and **Ken Snodgrass** for their articles and pictures featured this month.

Remember... All published articles earn a free breakfast, entry into the year-end newsletter drawing AND your articles will be appreciated by your fellow members and the newsletter editor, and you will also earn points toward the **2018 MOTY Award!**



MSTR Heads Up

Here's a listing of some of the upcoming local or regional events and meetings within the next few weeks to months. If you know of a local motorcycle event in

Michigan or Ontario the MSTR would be interested in attending send Ian Orr an e-mail at Communications@mstriders.com with the details.



2018-2019

The two closest Progressive International Motorcycle Show locations to Michigan are the Cleveland and Chicago locations. It's something fun to do involving motorcycles over the winter.



CLEVELAND, OH
01.25.19 - 01.27.19



CHICAGO, IL
02.15.19 - 02.17.19

MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, December 15th, 2018, @ 9:00 AM
George Murphy's at the Creek, 36000 W
Seven Mile Road, Livonia

Gregg Mitchell will be moderating this meeting.

MSTR WEST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, January 12th, 2018, @ 9:00 AM
Alibi Bar & Grill, 1394 E. Riverside Drive,
Ionia, MI www.alibionia.com

Please send an email to Gala (gschip@me.com) so she can plan on providing breakfast for everyone who attends. Breakfast will be available for \$11 plus tax & tip.

Keith Danielson will be moderating this meeting.

MSTR MOTY Banquet **January 5th, 2018**

The MSTRiders 2018 Member of the Year (MOTY) Banquet will be on Saturday, January 5, at George Murphy's at the Creek 36000 Seven Mile Road Livonia, MI, 48152.

We'll begin at 6:00 pm with a social hour, Hors d'oeuvres, and a cash bar. At 7:00, we

will have a buffet style dinner with 2 choices of entrée, followed by a dessert table provided by one of our dealer members. When dinner is complete, we'll be presenting the awards for the season, culminating with the MOTY award. There will be door prizes throughout the evening. To reserve your place, please RSVP with full payment by December 15. You can mail your reservation to the address below (a copy of the reservation form is on the last page of this newsletter), or if you will be at either the west side or the east side meeting you can bring your completed reservation and payment to the meeting. The cost is \$19.00 for an MSTR member and \$29.00 for a guest.

RSVP to: MSTR – Keith Danielson (Please make sure that you make the check out to Keith Danielson so that he can cash them) PO Box 852 Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0852. Seating will be limited, so send in your reservations early.



MSTR 2019 Rides

In 2019 we'll have a similar number of events for MSTRiders to attend.

The dates for many events have already been set and are listed on the Events page of the MSTR Website (www.mstriders.com)

MSTR Newsletter & Website

The MSTR Website ([MSTR website](http://www.mstrwebsite.com)) and Newsletter belong to you, the MSTRiders. They both can only be as good and as interesting as you make them. If you've got something to say about a ride, your bike, perhaps a trip you're planning, whatever, send it in for the newsletter and/or website to:

Rachel Durling: rachelshott@gmail.com

MSTR Photo Gallery

The MSTR maintains a SmugMug photo gallery ([MSTR Smugmug](http://www.mstrsmugmug.com)) to allow riders to upload and download pictures of various club events. Upload and download passwords are sent out to participants for each event. Click on the above link or visit the MSTR website and select the MSTR Photo Gallery link to check out all the event pictures.



MSTR Dealer Members & News

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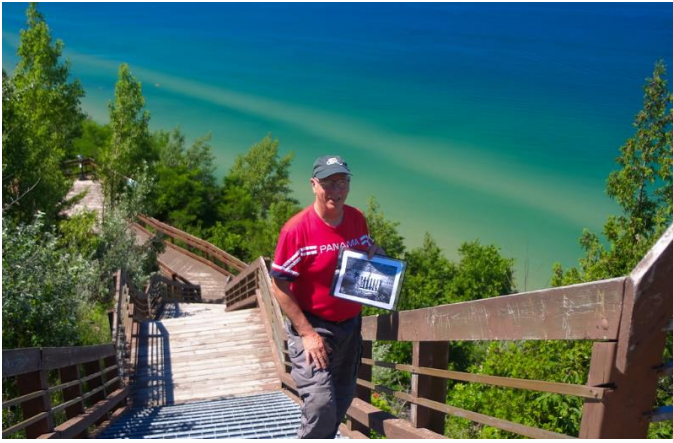
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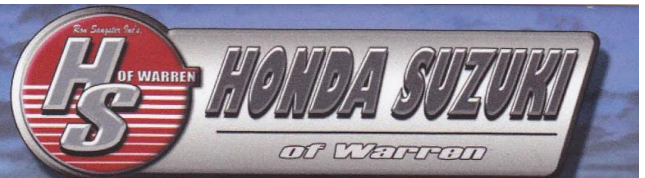
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2018 – MSTRiders MOTY Banquet Reservation

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Please Print Legibly

Member Name _____ \$19.00

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Total: _____

RSVP to:

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