

My first part of the Ride-about was to San Antonio to inspect a Tiger Moth for Rob a friend from South Africa, He pays my transportation so I chose to ride one last good trip this year. I made it to Dallas the first day thanks to the Day Long saddle. Installed a new Epoxy coated float in the Claudel-Hobson carb, checked the BTH magneto timing on the Tiger Moth and called it a day. Then I got a call from my friend Charlie in LA and he said "remember you owe me some labor and I am ready to collect". I told Mamie I was half way to LA so out I came. A couple of interesting events on the first leg of the ride-about. Between San Antonio and my first stop Socorro, NM. I took the scenic route. This took me through the desert and it ended up being very dark due to a monster thunderstorm in the desert at night with zero cars on the road and zero anything, no cell signal, no cell navigator. I thought more than once this is a bit scary. Then the light show brought me back into reality, this is really scary! No Faraday cage and I sit pretty high. My RT buddy Tony had just explained Faraday to me at a Paynetown campout. The desert light show is one I will not ever forget. It was spectacular.

Next day I headed towards Flagstaff early en-route to LA, again the scenic route. On this road I could see straight ahead twenty miles no traffic, no curves, no heat 26F, 85 mph on cruise. So I am cranking thinking "this works".

Then I saw a bunch of birds beside the road later defined as a Conspiracy of Ravens. They took flight very close to me, one changed direction and I point blank hit it center with my head. At the last millisecond I put my head down and bang, then silence I was knocked out, nothing. I woke up in my lane still on cruise and one hell of a headache. My first thought was, "am going under again" but I fought it off. It felt like I got hit in the helmet with a baseball bat. Five minutes later no headache and still on cruise at 85mph. It cracked the sunshield inside the Schubert which was retracted up inside the helmet. I called Mamie on the fly and told her where I was and what happened. Later in the day I was standing on the corner in you guessed it, Winslow. Actually I was having coffee at the little airport, my second visit there, my first was by way of my 1946 Swift aircraft October 12, 1998. I looked out the door as two Harley rider headed toward TheRaven on foot and just looked at her. Strange I thought. I said hi when they came in and got a nod. When I headed outside I realized I had left the key on and all the lights were on high for at least half hour. Now I know what they were looking at. I really like Odyssey batteries! Not a word from the unfellow bikers. Same day 14 hrs later still in the saddle, I am in the high Mojave desert near LA following the Apple Nav and road sign said "road surface ends". What does that mean? SAND 6 inches deep, loose and rutted and of course it is pitch dark, slipping the clutch in first gear We managed.

I thought if TheRaven goes down I am just going to lay on her and sleep. I did just name my first motorized mount ever after owning a few! Another big deal to me. But TheRaven flew and I am here in Adelanto until Sunday then home. Staying with Chuck and Charlie and having fun making airplane parts for their 1927 Laird Swallow biplane. Chuck is a real live mountain climber and adventurer so the stories kept me entertained every minute. Mamie shipped my cold weather gear and some extras. Wrote Schubert a letter and I received a free sun shield before I left for home.

Departed Adelanto airpark Sunday "O" dark thirty. Gave another Conspiracy a wide berth and remembered the folklore I read about Ravens, wisdom, doom, and the Isle of Man coat of arms. I started seeing pieces of tire on the road, then I took a long sniff and yes it smelled like hot rubber. Keeping an eye on the road for the big alligator I crept up on the culprit. So my nose is working and now I smell antifreeze. I know for sure it is not TheRaven relieving herself, could be

a Wasserboxer. The aroma's I pass through made me think about lots of things I associated with smell, mostly pleasant. I noticed my front Michelin Road Pilot 4 making a good bit of noise in Texas. As I swerved the noise pitch would change. The tires had never made noise so something is not right. So I stop for fuel. The tire pressure read 41psi and the air temp was 87f and cruising at 80-90 mph for over an hour. I surmised it was over inflated. I dropped it a couple psi and the noise never came back. Well the super duper storm of the century went to Weather Channel stardom and was on all the news from Alaska to Miami, Oklahoma my destination and finally caught up with me. I layered up, smart wool for the base and so forth. Talking gear my friend Rick had said this is your last layer of defense "The Rain Suite". I use the Olympia Moto Sports Horizon brand from Racer Parts Wholesale. Next I saw 31f on the thermometer then precip and a build up of what looked like droplets on the windscreen. No it was ice. Warning! ok here we go like the saying says it ain't over till it's over. So adapt and deal with it! I kept on riding watching for a shiny road but it was just wet, still warm from yesterdays 64f. I took 60 east off of I44 around Springfield, Mo and ended up in the Mississippi-Ohio river delta near Cairo. Very nice riding, good roads. 14 hrs with TheRaven on the day long riding through constant rain, wind and a high of 41f. I thought more than once "how does Andy Clark do it"? I have a new found respect for the Iron Butt guys. I finally realized why there is a rear brake pedal on TheRaven, so I do not have to release my hand from the heated grip for braking. By the way TheRaven is a 2011 BMW R1200RT I picked up in a salvage yard. My ride-about added 5600 miles in seven days of riding spanning a total of 14 days. 10200 miles since BMWOA St. Paul 2014. Another friend Dee said "just stop every 125 miles or so and turn a long trip into a bunch of mini trips" it works! My Sena bluetooth piped Spotify or my music to me all of 14 hrs everyday with no issues. It really helps pass the time on interstates. My biggest fear on the whole trip was deer strikes. Riding in November during the Rut. I worried mostly after dark. TheRaven is one of the finest machines in all ways I have ever piloted.

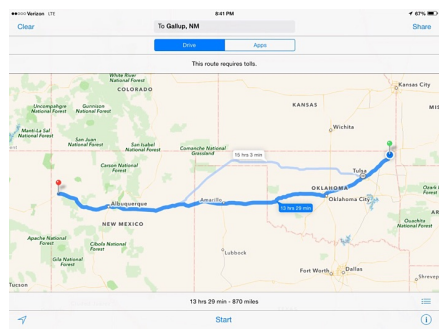
The gear for the trip is as follows, Schuberth C3 Pro, BMW Alround boots, Minus 33 merino wool long johns and shirt, LD Comfort long Johns, Shirt and skull cap, Smart Wool socks, Olympia Moto Sports Renegade mesh jacket with snap to the back camelback modification and Mesh overpants, with insulated liner and Ranger pants as well, Olympia goretex gloves, Olympia Horizon Rain gear, Gerbings heated jacket, Lee Parks insulated gauntlet gloves, LeeParks filtered earplugs, Sena 20s, Vedohl HD sunglasses. TheRaven sports a Russell Day Long saddle, 55watt high beam HID, Cyclops Adventure Sports LED driving lights and LED low beams for an amazing amount of defined light output. I hooked a SAE plug directly to the battery with a 10amp fuse. It powers everything I run on the bike. SAE to USB adapter takes care of most things. I would make no changes in any of the gear for temps to 25f. Four days after TheRaven and I got home snow. See some pictures below.



Rob's 1940 British Tiger Moth



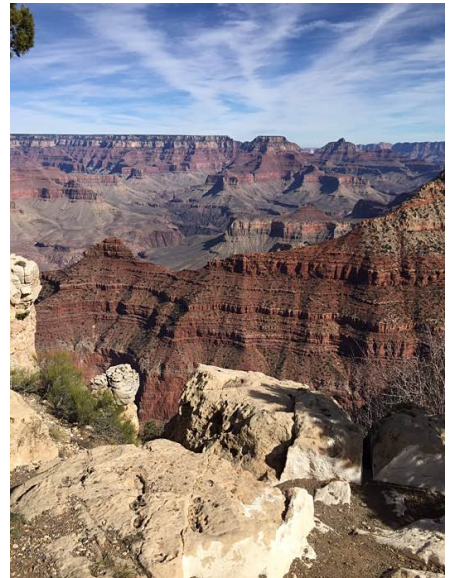
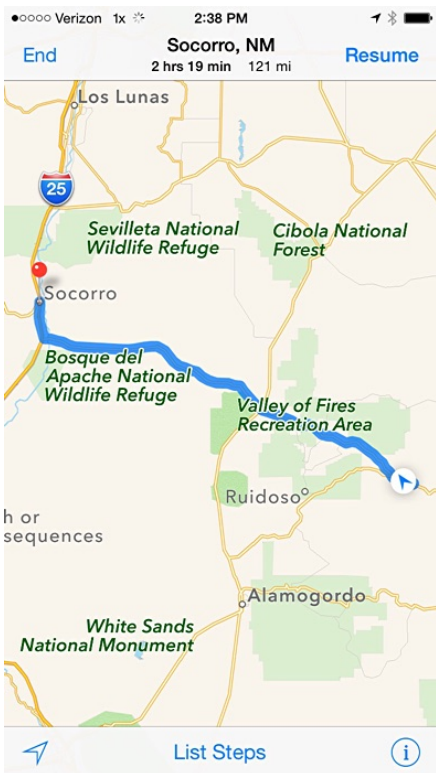
Pitts S2B 540 cid engine

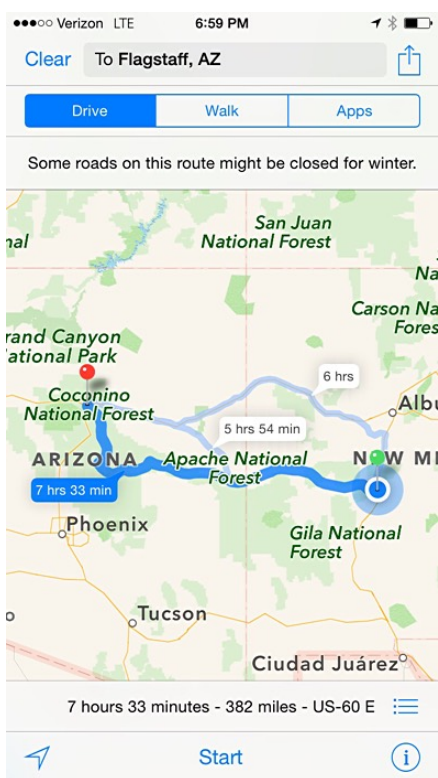
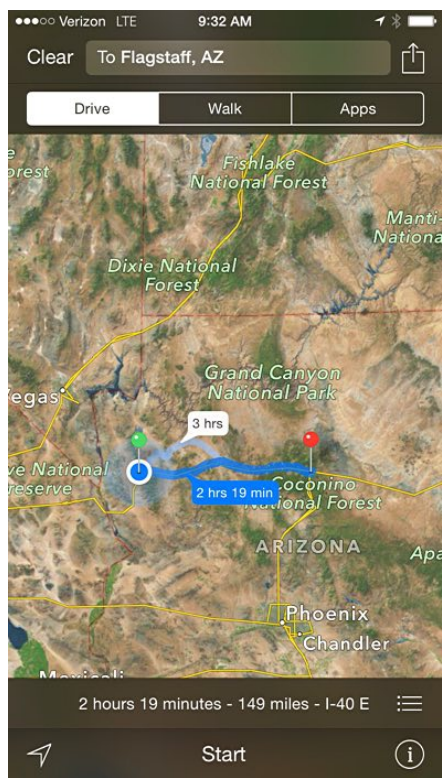


Valley of Fires park.



Raven Road





Meteor Crater

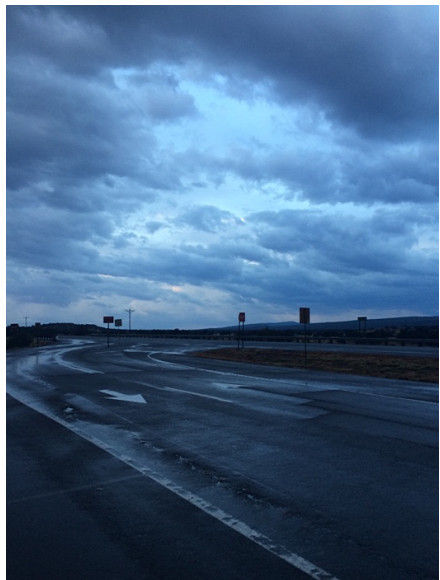




[Click for Video above](#)



Fitting sheet metal on the 1927
Laird Swallow





Blue Skies
Mike Williams
BMW OA
BMW WINDY CLUB
airheadflyer69s@gmail.com

I understand this is a short ride compared to some great rides I have heard about. I look at this one as a warm up to some rides on my bucket list.