

## RIDE TO RESTAURANT IN CLAYTON, GA (NOT)

Saturday, April 28, 2018

Meeting at the Citgo Station in Hiawassee on another cool N. Georgia morning (about 50°), we had 9 bikes and 13 riders ready to ride to Clayton, GA for lunch via Cleveland, GA. Those joining in on the ride were: Nestor & Iris Morin, Fred & Carol Henige, Tom & Jill McDaris, Roger & Dottie LeRoy, Bob Baillargeon & Kyle, Woodstock, Allen Cecil and Bill Schleicher.

We left Hiawassee via Hwy. 75 south heading toward Helen, GA. But, before long we turned on Owl Creek Rd. taking us to Hwy. 180 and past the entrance to the highest point in Georgia – Brasstown Bald. Continuing down the mountain we then turned on Craig's Gap Rd., a winding trail connection to Hwy. 348 or Richard Russell Scenic Hwy. The cool air on top of the mountain was a nice contrast to the warming valleys below. At the base of the mountain we turned right on Hwy. 75A taking us to Hwy. 129 and our rendezvous, at Ingles in Cleveland, with Gordon & Sandy Tombs.

Departing Cleveland, we headed north on Hwy. 75 toward Helen. Before reaching Helen we turned on Hwy. 17 east then onto Hwy. 255 north toward Clayton. By now the temperature was in the high 60's and the sky was clear. Hwy. 255 took us onto Hwy. 197 and then onto Burton Dam Rd. This road turns into Seed Lake Rd. and Rabun Lake Rd., one of the most scenic drives in the N. Georgia area. While traveling along this shore hugging twisty, we encounter numerous motorcyclists heading in the opposite direction.

Leaving the lake shore area, we passed through the community of Tiger. Approaching Clayton we came to barriers blocking our path now obscured with street vendors all the way to our restaurant. We tried to find a parking area for the bikes near the restaurant but the town was swamped with tourists and visitors to the street festival. Accepting the fact that even if we found a parking place for 10 bikes, the restaurant would be very crowded. Our earlier call to let them know we were coming did not reveal the fact that there was going to be a street rally. So, we headed for an alternate place for lunch and ended up at the Cupboard Café in Dillard, GA. This turned out to be a fine replacement to our first choice as we ended up getting a private room.

After an enjoyable lunch, some folks decided to head for home while the rest of us took Wolfork Rd. to Blue Ridge Gap Rd. which connected us to Persimmon Creek Rd. Reaching Hwy. 76, we rode west to Hiawassee and home. A great riding day with bright sunshine, white clouds and temperatures topping out at 72°. We know some folks were looking forward to dining at the Universal Joint in Clayton, GA so we will plan that for another time. We enjoyed a friendly 165 miles and smiles.

By: Roger LeRoy