

WWC 🌲 ROSEISLE BICYCLE RIDE August 8 2020

August 8th turned out to be a beautiful day, blue sky, warm breeze, and dusty roads.

The five of us, Bert, Judy, Rick, Sue and Stu departed Roseisle about 11am to challenge the hills and roads from Roseisle to St. Lupicin for lunch.

The first kilometre or so of washboard we hoped was not an omen of conditions to come. Thankfully the road became hard-packed with occasional sandy spots, over rolling terrain, past the Pumpkin Creek Ski hut and an old abandoned brick factory. Vehicle traffic was light but still enough to inflict grit in our eyes and mouths.

The day warmed quickly so frequent rest stops were normal protocol, one at a picnic bench where Judy conducted a display of table-top Yoga. With some of the poses given to Yoga poses, that one could have been named 'Dead Beetle On back' or 'Judy Watching Clouds For Strange Images'. Another possible one could have been "Take that picture and you're dead."

Back in the saddle, one particular query became tiresomely common: "Are we there yet?" Or "How far did you say this ride is?" I blocked these queries out with a recurring ear-worm; the theme song from Bonanza. Sore buns in the saddle will do that.

After crossing a nearly dry stream bed, the ascent began. It was moderate at first, winding gently up past small properties accessed by tree-shaded dusty roads. Some of us, myself included decided to dismount and trudge the last half-kilometre or so to the top of the valley. I believe only Sue and Bert gritted it out to the summit.

We took another breather at the top near a pasture where a local fellow had for years collected hundreds of old cars and had them arranged by make. It was difficult to see them through the shrubbery that had over the years grown to produce an impenetrable wall of green. On a previous ride years ago, I rode down to the property gate to get a better look at the cars. There were two signs on the gate posts. One said 'Never Mind the Dog, Beware Of Owner.' and the other, 'Trespassers Will Be shot, Survivors Shot Again.' I departed with alacrity.

The spire of the St. Lupicin Catholic church beckoned with the promise of lunch in the shade. The church and cemetery grounds were fastidiously well-kept. It was obvious there were a lot more dead people than live ones in the three-house village. It was so quiet, we could hear each other munching. Some even smacked their lips just to make conversation.

Finally, back in the saddle (cue music) and a predominately downhill and tail-wind return on the circuitous route. "How far is this ride?" came the lament. I turned up the volume on the Bonanza ear-worm, wishing I had packed my six-shooter water pistol.

A gentle descent, aided by a tail-wind, the scent of wild flowers and fresh-mowed hay. Utopia until, "Are you sure this is only 30 kilometres?" I had visions of a Super-Soaker assault weapon.

Finally Roseisle came into view and we had to endure a couple of kilometres of washboard before the welcome view of the convenience store. Judy did another Yoga display of 'Packing Grass While on Back'.

I had under-estimated the riding distance by eight kilometres but didn't feel atonement was necessary. Just hearing the creative laments provided ammunition for this story. Good thing I didn't bring my six-shooter.

—Stu Phillips



