

THE UNLIKELY “GANG.”

They're back! The Milford Wild Hogs & Hogette HAVE returned as the picture taken on Monday August 13th. at Hicks Store in Milford attests. The trip covering half of Ontario and Michigan and Wisconsin and 4500+ kms in 10 days was amazing as five County worthies set off on a Hyosung, a Yamaha, a BMW and a Honda; four bikes (one of our number who shall remain nameless Paul, had his lady cuddling him from behind) headed for places distant and west. as planned, the journey began from Hick's on Saturday August 4th. at 8.00 am as our last 'couple' FINALLY



Left to Right: John Wilson, Joyce & Paul Minaker, Bernie Gaw, Pastor Ian.

arrived with seconds to spare. Mandatory pictures were taken; engines started and we were off, our goodbyes and 'thanks' to loved ones for encouraging us to make the trip already said. There were many many things about the adventure that will remain in our minds for a very long time. Rolling into Tim's in Madoc for that first coffee stop and a stretch, along with about 500 cottagers, left us anxious to move on and away from the hustle of this part of Ontario. We had not gone too much further that first day when one of our number took us quietly on one side and told us that there were two things the Milford Wild Hogs needed to get straight before we went much further. The first one was the mandatory 'salute' to other motorcyclists on the road which, at this point in time, was a motley collection of waves, shrugs and suggestive hand movements that could have

landed us in serious trouble with an aggressive, not-so-friendly biker. The semi-military hand and arm movement was duly shown to us, fingers clenched in a specific way that would not be rude or suggestive, and we 'practiced' it together at the side of the road. The second item on the agenda was our names. Our nameless fellow traveler who had just guided us through our 'police-like' salute advised us that from now on we were going to use 'handles' instead of our birth names. I will let you guess who became who, with no prizes for the first correct answer received by our editor. First there was Enforcer. I wonder who that is? Then came Scottie. (That's a hard one to work out!!!!) Then Stretch; then Sweet Thing and finally Lady's Man.

Our salute and our names now established, we battled on towards our first night's rest stop in Powassan near North Bay. Although we were not riding Harley's, we felt a renewed sense of belonging as a biker group, our passing salutes flashing out with precision. At last we were beginning to look like the Milford Wild Hogs & Hogette. The village could be proud of us.

There are some things we inherit from birth. They must be locked deep inside our genes only to emerge as we wander along life's highways and byways. One of mine is a fear of heights. Now that might seem strange of one who is a qualified pilot. It shows that the fear CAN be overcome; however, traveling across a high bridge with a steel mesh deck as the road surface is not my idea of fun. Such a challenge was thrust upon me/us at Sault Ste. Marie as we exited Canada for the USA. To make matters worse we reached halfway across and the traffic came to a grinding halt when we were at the highest part of the bridge, 200 feet or more above the lake. The next 45 minutes were 1-o-n-g ones as we crept slowly towards my goal of setting foot on solid ground once more.

Having a 'different' accent has its benefits, and when the US border guard commented on it I fully expected the standard comment:.... "My mother came from Glasgow and her name was Mary, do you know her...she lived in the Maryhill district!!" This time it was something like: "That's a nice bike, what's it called....Oh is that right....well enjoy your vacation in the USA." The rest of the group enjoyed similar treatment, although one member had a narrow escape when he realized later in the evening that the passport his wife had given to him had expired 9 years ago. Oh well, he has a winning smile!?

So many stories and so little space, but one that bears telling is the person we met on the second night of our travels who attached himself to our group. He drove into our motel on a Goldwing, his suntanned wife or significant other glued to the rear seat. Conversation followed and we discovered that they were from Thunder Bay where he (his name, if you believe it, was given as 'Cosmos.') was a hairdresser. Two or three encounters later we were playing a quiet game of "Mexican Train," (dominoes to those of you who lack culture) and 'Cosmos' sidled up and was asked if