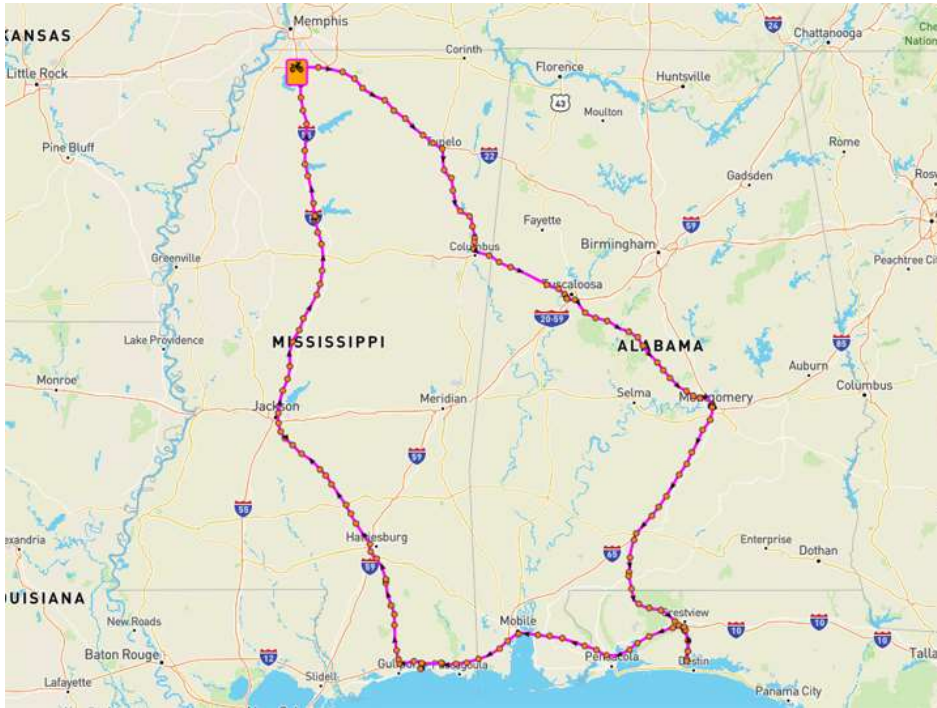


Air Force Birthday Ride



1,028 Miles in 16 hrs. 42 min.

***IBA Requirements for the Air Force Birthday Ride:** Your ride must include at least one DBR (Dated Business Receipt) for 18 September. You must visit at least four locations that are associated with the branch of service being celebrated. Each location must be at least 150 miles from any other location.*

For the Air Force Birthday Ride, my plan was to visit the Columbus AFB in Columbus, Mississippi, Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama, Eglin AFB near Destin, Florida and Kessler AFB in Biloxi, Mississippi.

I was up at 4:00 am. I rode down the street to the Circle K for a DBR. Official start time 4:48 am.

It was a beautiful dark morning as I headed out. I love to ride in the dark almost as much as in the daylight. Everything is in a different perspective at night. But, you do have to stay more alert since you can't see as far ahead or at your sides. Nothing different than if you were driving a car.

I get on I-269 eastbound to I-22. From there, I head southeast to Tupelo to Highway 45 south.

In Shannon, I continue on Highway 45 instead of the usual ALT 45 route

south that I'm used to. I don't think I've ridden this way before, so it was new to me as I made my way down to the Columbus AFB.



Columbus, MS

It was 7:00 am and the sun was up when I stopped to take the required photo/proof of visitation. I uploaded it to SpotWalla before continuing on.

In Columbus, I turned east on Highway 82. It's a nice 4-lane divided highway over to Tuscaloosa and on to Montgomery, Alabama.



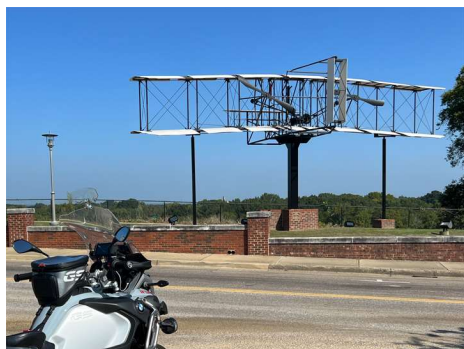
Montgomery, AL

I arrived at Maxwell AFB at 10:00 am. Since it was a Wednesday, it was a normal workday and the front

gate was busy, so I went to the Visitor's Center off to the side for my photo.

It was a beautiful fall day! The temperature was in the 80's by now.

I noticed when I exited off I-65, there was a Wright Brothers Flyer statue. I thought this would be a great stop to photograph for this birthday ride.



Wright Flyer Memorial

From Montgomery, I headed south on I-65 to Highway 31 south to Florida Highway 4 to Crestview. There, I jumped on Highway 85 to Eglin AFB.

It had been a beautiful day—Big puffy white clouds within a bright blue sky up above! Well, until I was almost to Eglin! Ahead of me, I could see what looked like a big patch of fog coming down from the sky. But, I could still see blue skies on both sides of it! I guess, it was about a half a mile wide with the road running right through the middle of it!

When I ran into it, it was like a wall of water—Torrential downpour! Cars were stopping along the

shoulder since there was very little visibility. I continued through it for about a mile before it was gone! Sunshine and white puffy clouds on the other side! It had to have been a microburst!

I stopped at the Air Force Armament Museum for my required photo. It was 1:00 pm.



Eglin AFB, Florida

Back on the bike, the weather was great again! The temperature peaked at 93 degrees as I rode west on I-10.

It was 2:30 pm when I rode through the Mobile tunnel that goes under the Mobile Bay. I was getting hungry and knew The Shed was only 50 miles away—My next stop!

About 10 miles from The Shed, the same thing happened! I rode through another microburst! Just like before, the bright blue sky was full of puffy clouds. Then suddenly, a cloud of fog was coming down from the sky. This time, I rode through a couple miles of torrential rain! Like before, cars were pulled off on the shoulder due to the lack of visibility. On the other side, the blue sky and puffy clouds

reappeared! I enjoyed the brief shower to cool down. By the time I walked into The Shed, I was almost dry.



BBQ Heaven on HWY 57

Karen and I have been coming to The Shed before it had its own TV show. Then, the original place burned down. They rebuilt it and added to the compound.

Over the years, it just didn't seem to be as good as our first time eating there. Well, this visit would earn back my respect. It was excellent! This is how I remember The Shed's BBQ. The ribs were outstanding! Now, I was ready for the 350-mile ride home. But first, I had to stop at Kessler AFB in Biloxi.



Biloxi, MS

When I arrived at the front gate to Kessler AFB, there really wasn't

any convenient parking. I just needed a quick pic, so I parked on the sidewalk, got my shots and went along my merry way!

I continued on I-10 to Gulfport where I headed north on Highway 49 to Hattiesburg and then up to Jackson. It was 7:00 pm as I rode through Jackson. The sun was setting.

I headed north on I-55. The full moon lit up the dark sky. I must have seen at least 50 deer along side the road between Canton and Hernando. One pair were eating right beside the pavement!

The temperature was great as I rode along. I enjoyed it! It was 9:42 pm when I finally arrived back in Hernando. 1028 miles in 16 hours and 52 minutes.

This was the second Iron Butt ride on the new 2024 BMW R1250GSA. Just like it's predecessor, it's a great bike that fits me well!

As for the ride—It was great! The weather was perfect, well except for a couple of microbursts. The temperature was comfortable. Another great day to be on the bike!

2024 BMW R1250GSA

Distance: 1,028 miles

Time: 16 hrs, 52 min.

Average Speed: 60 mph

Fuel Used: 30.307 gal

Fuel Mileage: 33 mpg

High Temperature: 93°

Low Temperature: 62°