

Walden CO – Newton KA

written by Marcus | 23 September, 2016



It's tempting to look back on our journey with a filtered view, imagining that it was non stop smiles and enjoyment. Flicking through the diary pages for this next section helps me remember that amongst the great times there were some low times too as the strains of over two years on the road were really taking their toll on our bodies, bike and most crucially our relationship.

11th September 2016 – 23rd September 2016

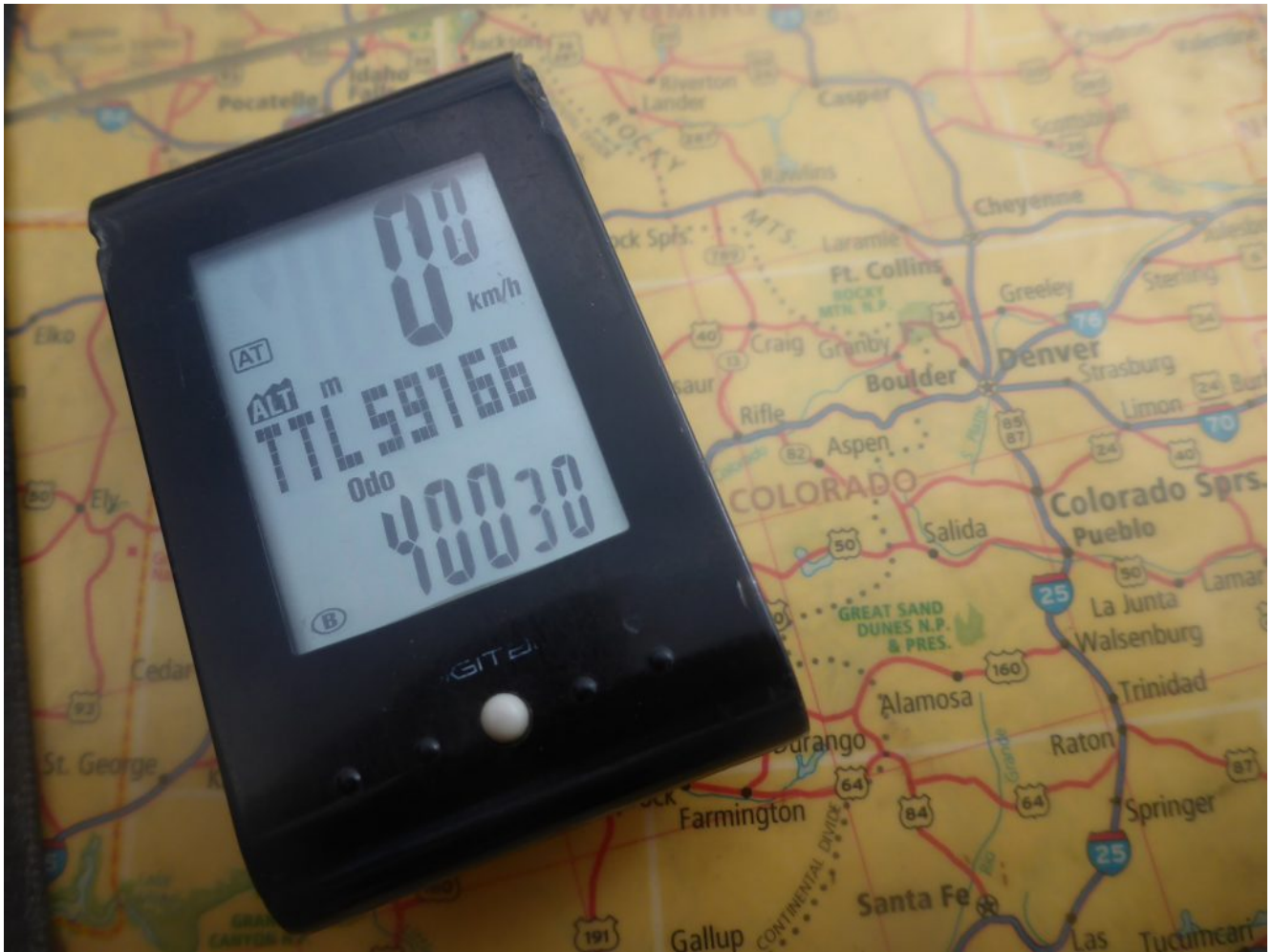
The thick sleeping bags that Melanie had leant us were very much appreciated during another freezing cold night. We have to reluctantly hand them back though before rolling out of town. Walden is supposedly the moose capital of Colorado so we scan the plains all morning but they must be on holiday

somewhere else.



Moose sighting

It's a big day for our riding stats today as, after reaching the brow of the next hill our speedo clicks over to 40,000km for the trip so far. A bit further on we reach 40,030km, now having ridden the equivalent to the distance around the equator. We give each other a big hug and the tandem gets an affectionate pat too, all three of us have made it this far together and it's an emotional moment.



40,030 km: Equivalent to once around the equator



An unlikely place for a yacht club (probably why it's for sale)

All the way from the Oregon coast the landscape has been like a creased bed sheet with rows and rows of mountains and hills taking us higher and higher into the Rockies. We're approaching the highest ridge now and the landscape around us is a lot more how I imagined the Rocky Mountains to be with swathes of dense pine forests and towering cliffs. After summiting the Willow Tree Pass we ride alongside the Willow Creek in a wide valley. This is one of the head waters that feeds into the Colorado River so this unassuming stream will eventually help carve out the mighty Grand Canyon. It's a gentle descent that requires no brakes but offers plenty of free speed so we can just sit back and enjoy the ride.



Descending from the Willow Tree Pass

Then there's a commotion in the trees to our left and a moose bursts out onto the road. With long, gangly legs it clumsily gallops to the other side and clambers up the bank and back

into the forest.

We finish the day at Hot Sulphur Springs. A man in a 10 gallon hat directs us to Pioneer Park where camping is allowed. I'm hoping for a good night's sleep as I've been feeling grotty all afternoon but the camp site sits near to a level crossing. It's compulsory for trains to honk their horns day and night and it's surprising how busy that line is at 3am. It's also surprising how loud those horns sound when they're within 20m of your head.



Will someone shut that train up!

There are two services that have particularly impressed us in the US: Their post offices and their libraries. Even the smallest, most remote towns are likely to have one of each, providing a vital lifeline for communication and information. In the unlikely named town of Kremlin we arrange to 'bounce' a parcel that had arrived in Walden after we'd left. It'll now overtake us so we can collect it in Pueblo in a few days time

instead. This is a free service that you can use as often as you like so some people bounce parcels all the way across the country until they need their contents. We hoped to be able to use one of the computers in the library but it's shut so we join a small handful of other people making use of the free WiFi that broadcasts to the immediate vicinity.



The valley out of Kremlin

We have been collecting an interesting list of races that “we should do one day” during the trip that has included various ultras and marathons in the Himalayas, Angkor Wat and Japanese Alps. Before setting up camp near Dillon Lake we see posters advertising the local triathlon claimed to be the highest in the world. Definitely one to add to the list.



Lake Dillon at dawn



Mountain peak at dawn

We're now approaching the heart of the Rockies' ski area so the towns smarten up and the log chalets increase in size accordingly. A well made cycle path allows us to climb up to Breckenridge away from the busy main road. The trees up here are already showing their autumn colours and provide a blazing tapestry of oranges, yellows and reds on the side of the mountains either side of us.



Colours of Colorado

Breckenridge is a friendly, bustling resort town and provides everything we need. From a new spoke, tyre and gear cable for the bike to a pair of shorts from a thrift store [still in use to this day] and plenty of food to fuel us for the last climb of the day. The winding road stretches 15km from Breckenridge to the top of the Hoosier Pass, the highest point on the Transam, standing at 3,518m. This marks our 9th and final visit to the Continental Divide so in theory it's all downhill to the Atlantic from here...



Ski shop in Breckenridge



Hoosier Pass, the highest point on the Transam

It starts to snow so we pull on jackets and begin the speedy descent down into South Park. My frozen knees turn numb and I hunch down over the bars with Kirsty sheltering behind my back. The road eventually levels off across the high, desolate plains. A few houses dot the horizon, standing alone high up here with their occupants choosing a life of solitude and hardship in return for the stark beauty of their surroundings.



Dropping down off Hoosier Pass



Storm clouds and sunshine

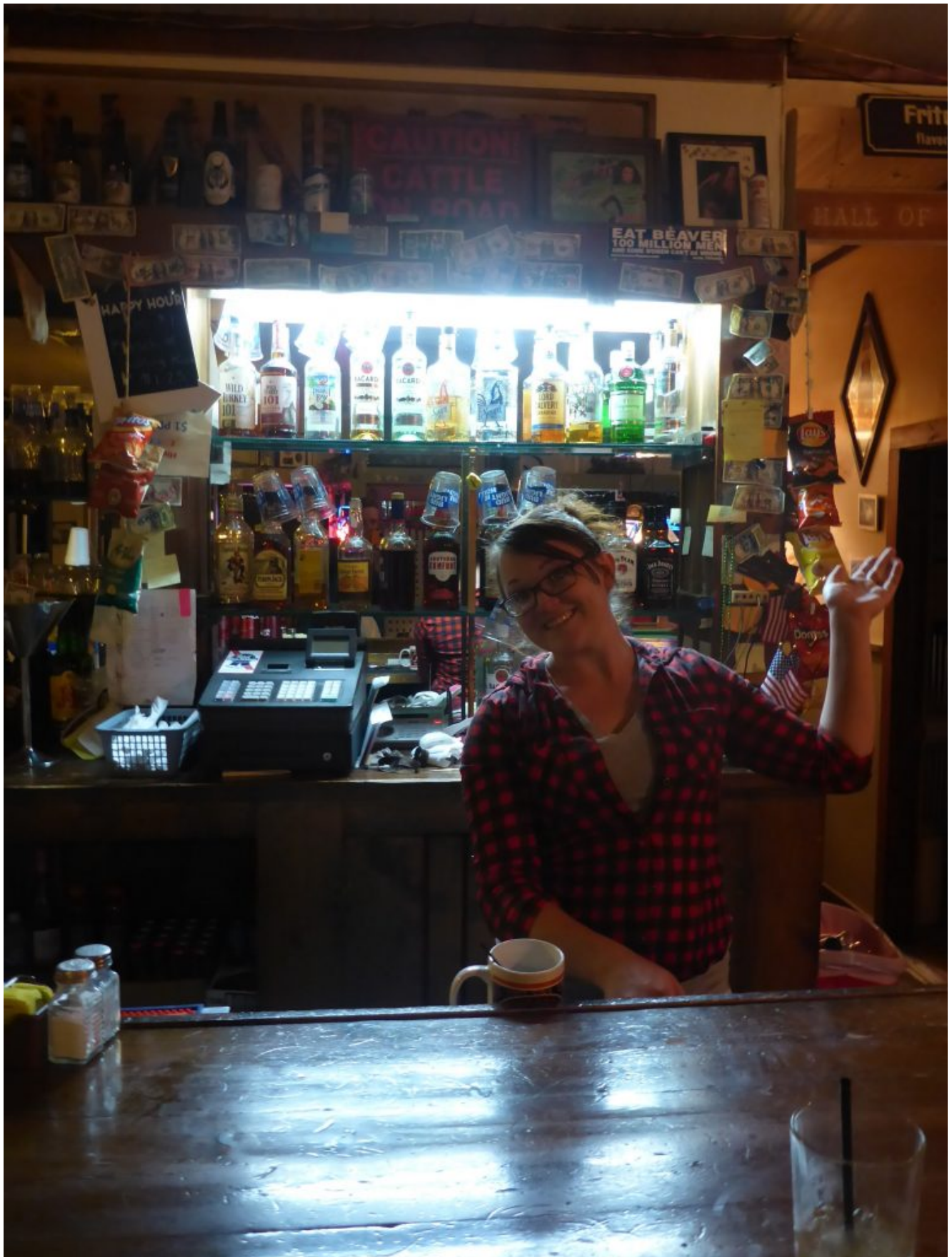
We spend the night in Hartsell, a tiny town of just 40 residents. The official campground has been closed down after some cyclists made a nuisance of themselves, but the saloon offers a patch of ground out the back for us instead. We're soon joined by a fellow Brit when Andy from Reading arrives. He's been riding the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route, a spectacular, 3000 mile ride from Canada to the border of Mexico along the Continental Divide, a journey prompted by voluntary redundancy from his job. This is one of the few points where the Transam and the GDMBR intersect and it's interesting to compare our experiences. His route has largely been on very remote trails away from any civilisation. It's also great to find someone who speaks the same language as us after so long away from the UK, so we all pile into the Hartsell Saloon for the evening.



Hartsel Jail, Colorado

"When a town is this small we all just have to get along", Kat tells us from behind the bar. Everyone does seem very friendly, from the local pot dealer (Colorado legalized

marijuana in 2012) to the girl who is planning on hitching up to North Dakota to join in an oil pipeline protest. We're invited along too but have to make our apologies.



Kat in the Hartsel Saloon

In the morning a heavy mist drifts through the town off the surrounding mountains. Andy spends an hour stuffing things into the variety of bags attached to a variety of different bits of his bike before rumbling off towards the gravel roads. We clip our panniers on and zoom off down the road. We're now crossing the base of an ancient volcanic caldera, bubbling with hot springs. Once over the opposite rim the road takes us down for several miles. The trees begin to thin out with ochre cliffs and sparse scrub replacing the verdant shades we'd enjoyed higher up as we drop into Royal Canyon.



Andy, a Great Divide Mountain Bike Route Rider



Royal Canyon

In Florence, after being woken twice by automatic sprinklers washing our tent in the night (again) we're woken again by stall holders setting up for their farmers' market. Once we emerge, bleary-eyed from our tent we're approached by Larry who introduces himself as the deputy mayor and asks if we're enjoying our stay? Deciding not to lodge a complaint about the sprinklers we begin to chat about what we're up to. When we mention that we rode through China he asked if we visited Xi'an which of course we did. "You must come and visit my home then!" he cries without explanation. With some curiosity we take up his invitation, pack up, pick up some fruit from one of the stalls and head over to his address. We climb the stairs to his flat and are greeted first by his wife Beryl but peering over her shoulder are two chinese soldiers and a horse. Where most people would buy a small model for the mantelpiece, Larry and Beryl have had exact, life sized replicas from the Terracotta Army shipped over after a visit

to Xi'an. It's an impressive and bizarre sight to find in a small Colorado town.



Beryl with their replica Terracotta Warriors

Even more impressive and somewhat more chilling is the enormous prison complex that we pass a few miles outside of Florence. Known as the Alcatraz of the Rockies this 'Supermax' facility covers a vast area with rows of fences and concrete walls protecting the buildings in the distance. Some of the country's most notorious inmates are housed here in solitary confinement including the Oklahoma Bomber, Uni Bomber and a certain Dzhokhar Tsarnaev the remaining brother responsible for the bombs in Boston in 2013. This is the second time we've been within a few hundred metres of that last character and we're glad that this time he's behind bars and concrete, and fences and more concrete, and barbed wire....



‘The Alcatraz of the Rockies’ Not somewhere you want to end up
The road rolls over increasingly dry scrub land, the high mountains now filling the view far behind us. We eventually drop down into Pueblo for a couple of days’ rest with Warm Showers host, Mike. Pueblo is another milestone as it marks the halfway point of the Transam route. It’s a funky little town with plenty of street art and we enjoy a guided tour with Mike. He’s an enthusiastic character that seems to have been given a new lease of life after a recent separation. His current project is to run for state governor representing the ‘No Party Party Party’. He’d get our vote without a doubt.



Pueblo by night



Street art in Pueblo

As well as a place to rest, refuel and reset, Pueblo is the pickup point for our parcel which has arrived safely from Walden courtesy of USPS. We have a good sort out of the

panniers and manage to find 8kg of kit and souvenirs that we no longer need so box it up to be sent home. If only we'd done that before tackling all those hills.



Vote Mike for Governor!

Mike has become something of a stalwart host for Transam cyclists and tells us about another 'superhost' for the following night. 85km further east, we find Gillian, a relocated Kiwi who has a small holding in the small town of Ordway. Her offer of accomodation in her caravan comes at a small price as everyone who stays is assigned a task to earn their keep. Kirsty gets to walk her pack of dogs while I'm given a bundle of paracord to unravel. It seems like a fair deal.



Kirsty and Gillian

The last couple of days in Colorado shake out the final ruffles from the mountains with some very gentle hills before we hit the flatlands that form the central regions of this continent. With the reduction in altitude comes an increase in temperature with the middle of the day peaking at 35°C. We seek shade under trees when we find them at tiny settlements with a population of 9 or 10 people, 1 horse and 100,000 flies.



Abandoned train, outside Ordway



Nearly home to Bristol ?

We cross into Kansas and with it comes a new time zone and a new challenge. The road straightens out in front of us as a never ending grey line disappearing into the horizon. The fields of wheat either side rustle in the wind and predictably bend in our direction as the strong easterly blows into our faces.



Entering state number 7

I try various things to help the kilometers pass, mostly involving distraction techniques. I spend as long as possible focussing on the white line at the side of the road as it

flashes by. I try not to look up at the grain silo that isn't getting any closer. I try not to look down at the speedo to see the distance clicking over all too slowly. Is it even working?



A typical day in Kansas...



...what's that up ahead?...



...another grain elevator!

The plains of Kansas are feared by Transam cyclists just as much as the mighty hills on either side. It's a mind game as much as a physical test so if your head and your legs aren't feeling strong then the plains will give you a very hard time.



Big skies over Kansas

We're sharing this stretch with Charlie, who has ridden his beautiful, white, steel bike from Sacramento, California and is on his way to Buffalo, New York. He shows up to camp at the same water towers as us each evening then spends the day travelling at his own speed. The towns in Kansas don't mind us using their parks but in some we have to register our presence with the police. In one we forget to do this and get a visit from a patrolling officer who is just happy to have an excuse to stop for a chat. It's a welcome break from chasing kids who are breaking curfew. Here under 15s have to be home after 10pm while 15-18s can stay out until midnight.



Camping at Leoti, Kansas with vultures roosting on the water tower

We can see the grain elevators shimmering in the distance from about 20 miles away, the only tall feature in any direction.

Crickets chirp from the grass and at one point make a mass exodus across the road, bouncing off our panniers and sounding like popcorn. There are also nodding donkeys working away amongst the fields and the smell of crude oil causes us to gag whenever we find ourselves downwind of one. It all makes the taste of a cold, fizzy drink all the more refreshing and when we find a drive (ride) through burger restaurant with milkshakes we might as well have arrived at Nirvana.



Oil and agriculture



Decision making at a drive through burger bar

At this point in the trip Kirsty and I seem to have fallen into a resigned acceptance of each other. Spending 24 hours a day within a metre of each other for over two years makes for an intense situation to test any relationship. We share the same ambition to complete this ride but it's clear that the current difficulties of the ride are bringing our frustrations with each other to the surface. There are a few mornings with breakfast eaten in complete silence. Somehow we need to hold it together for a few more weeks and that means trying to keep each other happy and trying not to forget why we're here. After all, a bad day on the bike is always better than a good day in the office.



Kansas parking lot



Harvest time

Way back in Oregon we took a photo of a sign advertising Newton Bike Shop, "An oasis in the grassy desert". That was 1510 miles ago and it seemed ridiculously far away at that point. A lot has passed under our wheels in the meantime but now we get to walk through the door and spend the night in their cyclists' hostel. We're joined by Charlie and also meet Dan from Florida who is also easing his way along the Transam. It's just the evening we needed as we sit down to watch the film 'Inspired to Ride' following riders on the inaugural Transam Race. We stuff ourselves with pizza and are given free use of the shop's beer tap by the owners James and Heather who leave us to it.



These gloves have ridden over 40,000 km

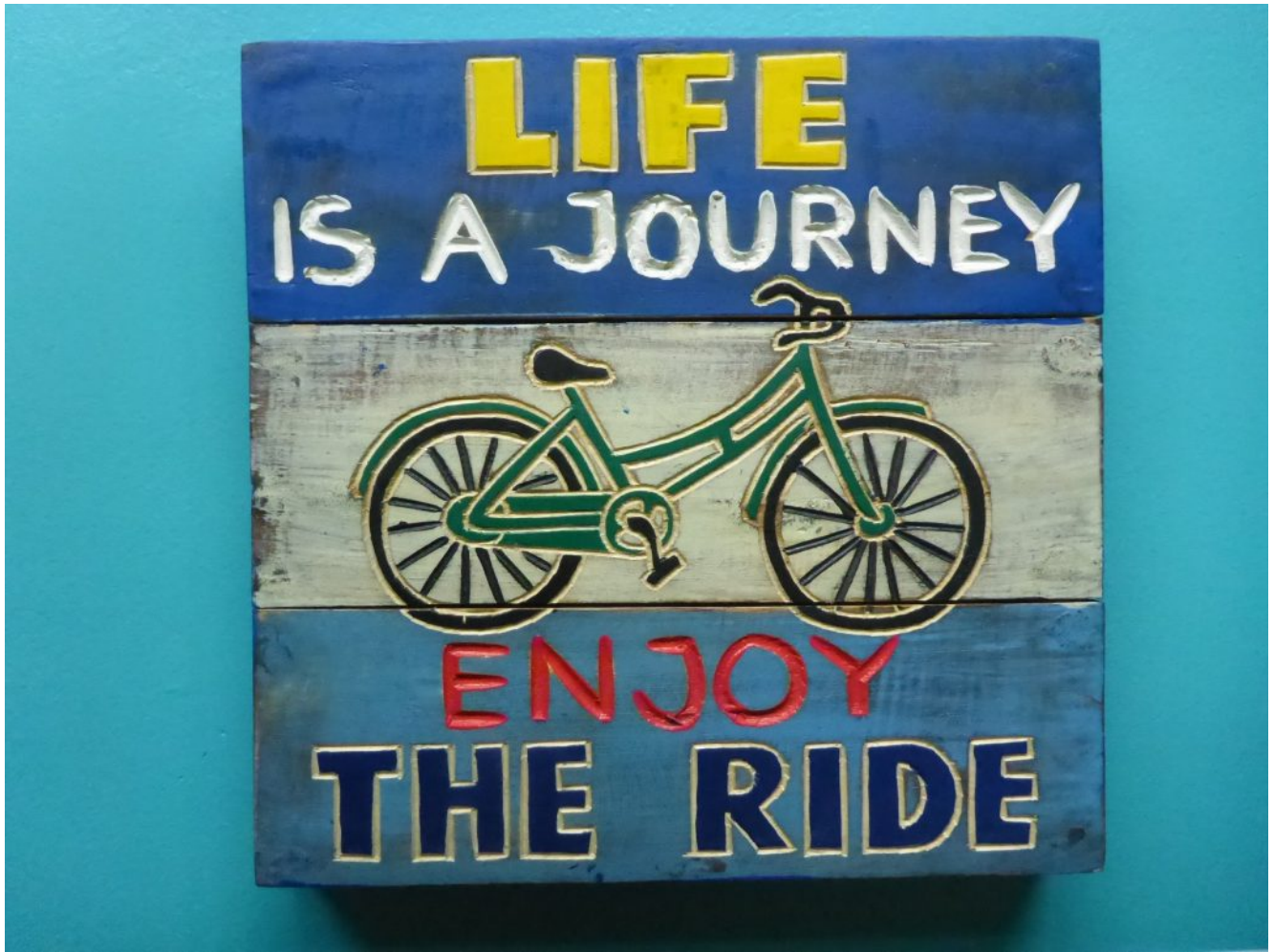


Time for some new ones



James and Heather at Newton Bike Shop, Kansas

The film is a great chance to appreciate what we've already achieved and what exciting adventures are still to come and it suddenly all comes back into focus. We've come this far so surely we can finish the job? The three of us: two crew members and a bike all have our grumpy days but surely the good days far outnumber them? So long as we continue to function as a team we can get through the worst of times and that's why I'm sure we'll make it to the end. After all there are only 1700 miles left to go.



A fitting sign in Newton Bike Shop

West Yellowstone, MT to Walden, CO

written by Marcus | 23 September, 2016



The events in this blog happened 3.5 years ago at a time when the current news unfolding and unravelling around the world were unthinkable. But amongst all of the troubles and losses caused by the pandemic some little gems are emerging as people use their forced isolation to be creative, connect with people, help their communities or just have a bit of a tidy up.

For my part, this week I've dug our vegetable patch, taken part in an online dance party and decided to start filling in the gap in our blog that somehow never got written. Some of the details will no doubt have been lost in the fog of my memory but I'll try and tell the story of our journey from Wyoming to the finish line in installments over the next few weeks.

2nd September 2016 – 10th September 2016

On our first night in Yellowstone we're treated to a talk by Ranger Jack who tells us a bit more about the park. "There are 10 wolf packs and 250 grizzly bears but these animals tend to

stay well clear of visitors. You're much more likely to be gored by a bison, burn to death in a boiling mud pool, drown, get crushed by a dead tree or fall off a cliff. A lot of of these things happen to people while they pose for a selfie."



Entering Yellowstone Park



Elk stopping for a drink



We're now in Wyoming, our 5th state

We emerge from our tent the next morning after a sleepless night worrying about the old, creaking tree next to our tent. We rescue our food and stove from the steel bear box provided to stop inquisitive bears stealing visitor's pic-a-nic baskets. Or stealing visitors.



Bear Box

There's a rule in the park that you should not get any closer than 100 yards of bears or wolves and 25 yards of all other animals. What they don't tell you is what to do if the animal approaches you. So when an enormous bison ambles up to our tent as our porridge bubbles away on the stove we sit tight and hold our breaths. He's a colossal animal but seems entirely uninterested in our breakfast so we breathe a sigh of relief when he continues on into the forest.



A visitor for breakfast

Ahead of us lies 2.2 million acres of forest, mountains, rivers and lakes all supercharged by one of the largest areas of geothermal activity in the world. We're sharing it with a convoy of tourist buses as we've managed to arrive for the Labour Day weekend, a national holiday. Despite the crowds, it's a very impressive sight. We spin up to the lower geyser basin for our first views of boiling hot ponds, bubbling mud pits, steaming fumaroles and spitting geysers. The smell of sulphur lingers in the nostrils everywhere we go.



Kirsty at The Blue Lagoon



Petrified trees with white 'bobby socks'

Further up the valley we find the Grand Prismatic Spring, an enormous, rainbow coloured, steaming phenomenon spilling into

the hot river that we've been following. I'd seen photos of this many times and was suspicious that it could actually be real but here it was before our very eyes in all its multi-coloured glory. The early explorers had the same problem when they reported their findings back to Lewis and Clarke for the first time. Their tales of 100 foot geysers, volcanoes and hot rivers surrounded by beasts of all shapes and sizes were initially laughed at as being the stuff of fantasy.



Grand Prismatic Spring



Visitors on the boardwalk

The main event for many is Old Faithful and the park authorities know it. They've built what amounts to be a small stadium around the geyser behind which are hotels, restaurants and fast food cafes. We all gather on the benches ready for

the next performance which takes place every 90 minutes. As the time ticks by the crowd gets restless and I half expect someone to shout "Get on with it!". Then there's a short spurt of water from the crater as everyone gasps and moves a bit closer to the edge of their benches. Another spurt and another collective gasp. Then WH00000SSSSHH! 30,000 litres of boiling water launches 50m into the air and we all "ooh" and "ahh" as if it's a firework. In typical American style there's a round of applause for the geothermal feature. Thank you Old Faithful, that was truly impressive and the extra 10 minutes we had to wait meant that it was bigger than average.



Waiting for Old Faithful



Thar she blows!

On a plateau like this it's easy to forget how high up we are so it comes as a surprise when we winch up the next couple of passes and see that we've crossed the Continental Divide for the 2nd (2515m) and 3rd (2556m) time. Our campsite for the night is next to Lewis Lake and we cross the divide once again before spinning down to find a spot for our tent. People used to use the 'cook on the hook' fishing technique here where a freshly caught fish would immediately get dunked into a boiling pond. They've since realised that fish probably don't enjoy being boiled alive so the practice has been banned.



Yellowstone River

Yellowstone was always going to be hard to beat so it's with some disappointment that we drop down out of the park the next day. Large swathes of charred trees line the road. We're lucky to get out this way as wild fires had closed the south entrance until 4 days ago.



Passing the remains of a wild fire

We've only just begun exploring Wyoming and it's a state that has plenty more to offer. Not least of which are the Teton Mountains that come into view just in time for us to admire them over a lunchtime picnic. We could have sat there all day but we have to turn our backs on this magnificent view as our road turns east and we begin our next big climb. Togwotee Pass tops out at 2900m and it's too much for today so we're forced to camp a few hundred metres from the summit. We'd passed a camp site further down that didn't allow 'soft sided shelters' and the bear warning signs have been becoming more frequent. Our roadside clearing doesn't have the luxury of a bear box so I collect all our food and cooking gear into a bag and climb a tree to suspend it from a high branch. Every crack of a stick and rustle of leaves has us tense up as we spend most of the night wide-eyed and nervous.



Grand Teton National Park



Getting our food out of reach

Overnight our tent is battered by wind and rain but thankfully no bears and I'm pleased to see our bag still dangling from the tree in the morning. It's freezing cold so the last few kilometres of climbing to the top of the pass are very welcome to build up some heat. The ridgeline still wears a blanket of snow and huge jagged peaks stand all around us. Coming the other way we meet several other cyclists including Mya from Burma who is writing a cookbook for cyclists and Tim and Jimmy from Colorado who interview us on the hard shoulder for their newspaper.



Another visit to the Continental Divide



Mya on her way West



The descent off the top is a cyclist's dream. Smooth roads and sweeping bends have me whooping with delight. The landscape begins to change with lush green trees giving way to arid red and orange rocks with painted ranches dotted alongside the huge meandering loops of the Wind River. We're now in the Wind River Valley and it lives up to its name as a strong breeze helps us on our way to Dubois.



Dropping down from Togwotee Pass



Ranch in Wind River Valley

We spend the night at the Dubois Episcopal Church and are invited to dinner by the caretaker, John. His wife Julie happens to be a baker so we have to be polite by accepting her

offer of tasting some freshly made cakes and leaving with a bag of tasty muffins. The church itself resembles a log cabin and proudly claims to be 'very old' having been built in 1910. John is a very proud of this until I tell him my home village has a church dating from the 12th Century!



Dubois Episcopal Church Est. 1910

The Wind River Basin is home to the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Native American tribes in the huge Wind River

Indian Reservation. We roll into Fort Washakie to find a very run down town completely at odds with the smart little settlements that we'd passed through further up the valley. A large gift shop touts predictable souvenirs with hundreds of dream catchers, animal hides and t-shirts with wolves howling at the moon. The problems inherent in these communities are well documented but there seems to be little evidence of a solution.



Wind River Valley

As if to highlight the contrast between life inside and outside of the Reservation our next stop is Lander, a bustling little town that is popular with adrenaline junkies who enjoy climbing up and throwing themselves down the surrounding mountains. We find ice cream parlours, thai restaurants and a busy high street of shops that makes it feel like another country compared to Fort Washakie. Once again we're incredibly grateful for our privileged position of being able to make the choice to keep on riding through all these places and to be looked after by kind hosts like Lydnsey and Mike. Lyndsey is another baker so when our bread gets eaten by one of their

dogs in the night she replaces it with some fresh banana bread.



Drive through off licence in Lander



Lander bike frame fence



Lyndsey and Mike, our Warmshowers hosts in Lander

Wyoming is the size of the UK but has a population of just 500,000. This leaves some huge open spaces. It's a 100km ride between Lander and the next town of Jeffrey City and apart

from an RV park and a Mormon Handcart Visitors Centre there's not a lot of life in between. Other than an angry rattlesnake makes its presence known with a furious shake of its tail as we climb up to the top of Beaver Rim. We're nearing South Pass on the Oregon Trail that was a pivotal junction for the early settlers. At this point they had to decide whether to take the trail south to Utah, South West to California or North West to Oregon. Lives would be defined on this huge expanse of nothing.



Another day in Wyoming



Roadside rattler

Somewhere back in Oregon we'd been given a piece of paper by a Westbound Transam cyclist with recommendations for our route ahead. One line that stuck in our minds was that we must "...find the mad potter in Jeffrey City. We stayed with him and the night ended with him trying to put a fire out on the roof. It was wonderful". Jeffrey City is a ghost town with a population of just 58. A far cry from its boom times in the 60s when thousands moved here to work in the nearby Uranium mine. A huge high school was built, several churches and even an Olympic sized swimming pool. But when the Uranium market collapsed in the late 70s almost everyone moved away, some even taking their houses with them. What's left are a few hardy souls who like solitude, and some enormous buildings that stand empty.



A Church in Jeffrey City



Abandoned buildings, Jeffrey City



Closed cafe, Jeffrey City

The Monk King Bird Pottery is easy to spot by the side of the road so we park up and poke our heads through the door. A scribbled sign instructs us to make some noise and if no-one appears then try the bar across the road. "Hello?" I call out. There's a murmur from a pile of blankets in the corner and a

bearded face pears out. This is Byron, the potter and Transam legend.



The Monk King Bird Pottery, Jeffrey City

He rubs his eyes and begins to take in the two people standing in front of him. “Ah, you’re bicyclists! You can stay in my bus!”. The pottery is a complete mess but there are plenty of finished articles for sale. His best sellers are a range of mugs with bullet holes in them. Tourists on their way to Yellowstone shoot them when the clay is still wet and by the time they come back Byron has fashioned them into a useable mug. “But why is it called the Monk King Bird Pottery” we ask Byron. “I wanted it to be called the Mocking Bird Pottery but the sign writer misheard me”.



Byron, the potter



'Shot' Mugs



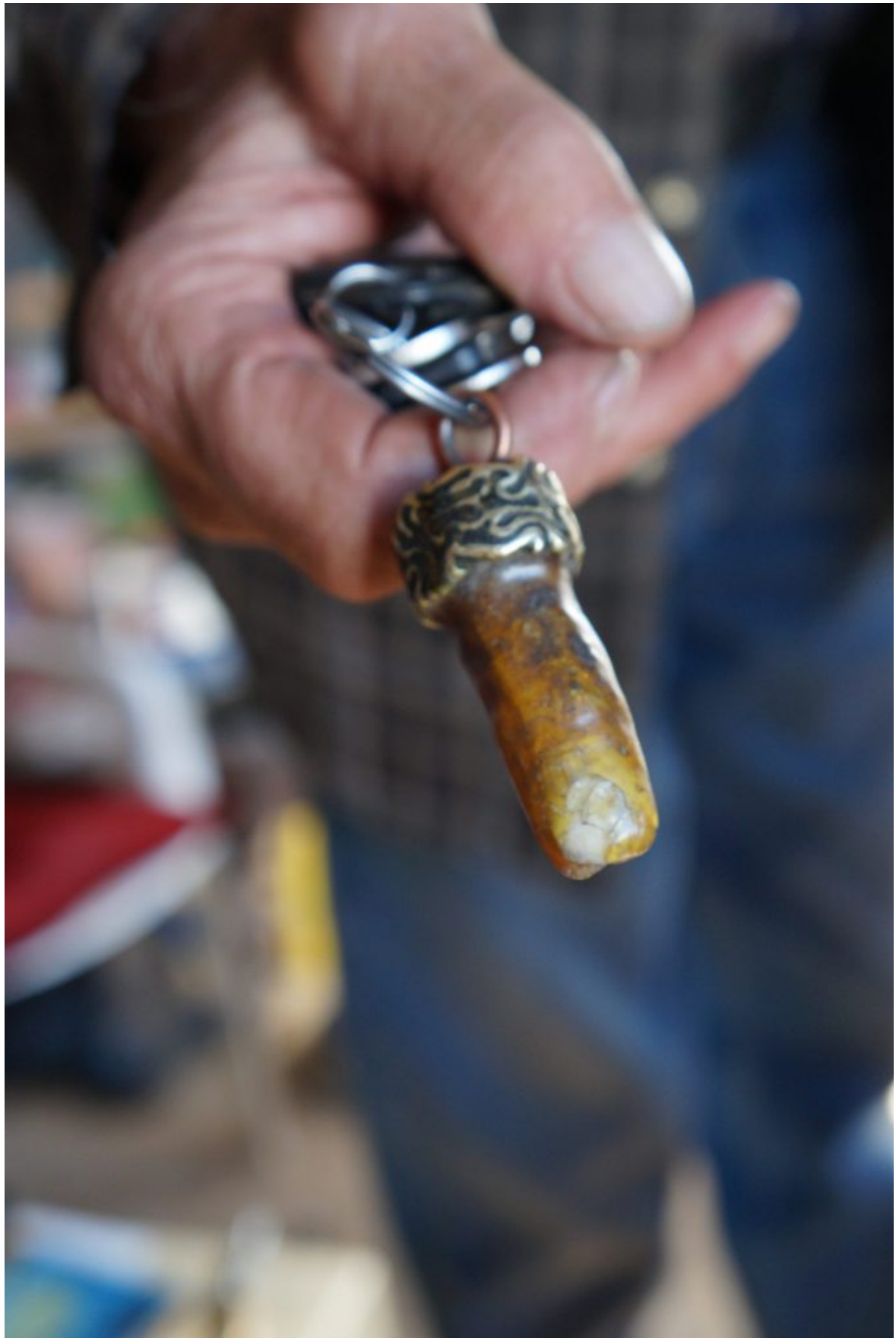
Settling in to Byron's partially converted bus

Byron introduces us to his neighbour Chuck who lives in a tiny house next door. He moved the house from the mountains a few

years ago. Chuck is a colourful character who served in the Vietnam war, worked as a cowboy, as an actor and in the uranium mines. He now spends his days as an artist and keeps his severed finger on a keyring. This is a town that seems to attract real characters.



Chuck



Chuck's unique keyring

The next couple of days take us over the wind blown expanse of the Great Divide Basin and onto Rawlins where we're kicked out

of a park by an apologetic policeman. Some towns encourage camping in their parks while others don't and this is one of the very few times in the entire trip where we've been asked to move on.



Split Rock



We love strong winds

As we begin our last day in Wyoming we leave our secluded camp spot behind a church just outside of Riverside. It had been a chilly night with outside temperatures dipping to -5°C so both of us are tired and tempers are on edge. To make matters worse the bike has been moaning too with a broken gear cable needing

to be replaced before we can set off.



Riverside Christian Community Centre

We stock up in Riverside then venture out onto the Skyline Road. A steady climb takes us into a sparse landscape that has become the default view for this state. Suddenly the chain jams and upon inspection I see that the cage of the rear mech has cracked. I try to bend it back into shape but as soon as we try to pedal again the chain jams again and drags the mech into the wheel to break a couple of spokes. Dammit!

As we contemplate our next move a ranger's truck pulls over and Melanie jumps out to see what the problem is. She rummages in her truck to find a hammer which I use to try and bend everything back into a useful shape but it's not looking good. She explains that it's 100 miles to the nearest bike shop and then spends half an hour ringing round everyone she knows to see if someone can help. It turns out that a man called Jeb can. He speeds over to collect us and takes us back to his

house a few miles away. In his enormous workshop stands an old mountain bike that he offers as a 'donor' bike. I immediately set to work transplanting the necessary parts onto our bike and replacing our broken spokes. Before long we have a working bike again. Jeb is not only a keen climber and occasional mountain biker but also happened to be a former State Senator. He's more than happy to help and refuses payment for the parts so we promise to send a gift from the UK once we get home.



Ranger Melanie, our road angel



Former Senator Jeb

He drops us back where we left off and we continue up and over into our next state of Colorado. As we spin along the long,

straight road chirping prairie dogs warn the rest of their village of our arrival. By 7pm we're in Walden and are joined for dinner by Melanie.who has kindly brought some super warm sleeping bags to borrow for the night. She's in charge of controlling a nearby wildfire where another 30,000 acres are currently burning. Just another normal day for a Wyoming ranger.



The road is long, with barely a winding turn.

We toast the sheer luck that she happened to be passing when she did as at earlier today we didn't imagine we'd have arrived here by bike. The road has treated us very well in Wyoming but now we have the last of the Rockies to contend with along with the highest climbs of the Transam. Let's hope our luck continues into Colorado.



Colorado. Put your snow plow away.

You can find a few more photos in our [Gallery](#)