

No. **2016**

Above: Mickie stands in the center of her 1976 TransAm group. (Photo by Dan Burden)

Right: Mickie during a 2001 visit to Missoula for the 25th anniversary Bikecentennial celebration, having just arrived after a solo tour from Halifax, Nova Scotia.



Notes from the Road, 1976

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG SIPLE STORY BY GAGE POORE

MAY 20 – We began the trip after a lot of bread with peanut butter. At the end of the day, some of us thought about the miles, our muscles, and bottoms while a small mountain stream made his sparkly noise outside our tents.

JUNE 6 – Our day of rest, but not for the washing machine. Missoula is a typical American city with big stores, drive-in movies, big advertisement-boards, and big cars. This was a place for lovers.

JUNE 14 – In bear-country, noisy bikers are safest because they are least likely to surprise bears. One member of our group, a loud, continuous talker, was our best companion on the trail. We left Yellowstone and entered Teton National Park.

JUNE 24 – The world showed her white face when we got up. Today we biked to the top of Hoosier Pass (11,542 feet).

JUNE 30 – We slept in the open-air. In the night, it came on to rain and we fled into a pigsty where we continued to sleep between grunting pigs.

JULY 4 – In Newton (Kansas) we celebrated the bicentennial. The feast was without alcohol because we were in a “dry county.” At 11:30 pm we saw fireworks.

JULY 18 – A Sunday as dull as ditch water.

AUGUST 8 – Congratulations! We made the trip within 83 days. We had our last dinner, our last apple pie, our last night, our last breakfast and we had to say goodbye.

These entries are from Maartje “Mickie” Smak’s Bikecentennial journal. The 1976, 4,100-rider TransAm Trail event launched Adventure Cycling and also launched Mickie on a decades-long love affair with bicycle touring. Since 1976, she has put in 250,000 touring miles and has ridden in 78 countries. Though she used a bicycle for basic transportation in her native Holland and had taken a few short tours, she said, “After 1976 in the USA tour, I realized I could do the whole world by bike.”

From Adventure Cycling’s National Bicycle Touring Portrait Collection. © 2015 Adventure Cycling Association.

Bring the **Bicycle Eclectic** traveling portrait exhibition to your town. Contact Greg Siple for more information: gsiple@adventurecycling.org