
Harley Owners Group (HOG)

HOGS – The Official riding club of Harley-Davidson

HOG NMR Ride – Saturday December 2, 2017 + Sturgis Part 5

Time again for the monthly New Members Ride! The HOGS frequently organise rides for their members and your participation is always at your discretion.

As with all New Member Rides, we meet at the premises of our sponsoring Harley-Davidson dealer, Frasers, at Parramatta Road, Concord. Our destination today is the Sugar Salt restaurant at 344 Galston Road, Galston. Today's ride will conclude back at Frasers at 1 pm where all HOG members and family are invited to the HOG Christmas Party until 4 pm. Another bonus is that today Frasers are offering 20% discounts to HOG members on all parts and apparel. Sounds like a great day!

The New Members Ride is a monthly ride where members both old and new can get acquainted participating in an easy ride.

Our complementary story this time is part 5 of my Sturgis experience. Because there is so much to talk about and because I want you to know about Sturgis, I will continue with it.

Technically, the annual South Dakota gathering of motorcycles and motorcycle culture is known as the "Sturgis Motorcycle Rally", but just one word will do, **Sturgis!** That's really all you need to say! *This world famous Motorcycle Rally is something just about every HOG member has on their bucket list. The rally for 2017 was from August 4 – 13.*

Hundreds of thousands of motorcycle enthusiasts from all over the world gather for this legendary event. Figures mentioned on local media this year in Sturgis predicted numbers of up to 450,000 visitors. But don't expect to see 450,000 people in Downtown Sturgis at the one time. These people are spread all over South Dakota at places such as the Black Hills, the Badlands, and visiting many of the historic towns like Deadwood, Keystone, Spearfish, Wall, or visiting Mount Rushmore or Crazy Horse Memorial for instance. There are so many interesting places to visit. And on all the surrounding roads and highways you will find a constant stream of motorcycles during the rally.

In this blog, including Sturgis Part 5, I will talk about the Badlands National Park which is part of the Sturgis experience.

Part 1 was with the Saturday September 2 ride blog.

Part 2 was with the Sunday September 17 ride blog.

Part 3 was with the Saturday October 7 ride blog.

Part 4 was with the Saturday November 4 ride blog.

These previous newsletters can be viewed by going to the NSW HOG website.

This newsletter contains images taken on the day of the HOG ride as well as further images from my recent trip to Sturgis, South Dakota. Some downloaded images are also shown.



HOG Ride Image 1 – We meet at Frasers for a 10 am departure. In the carpark we see from left George, Nicole, Shieldsey (Brook) and Grum Grahame.

Following images alternate between the HOG ride and the Sturgis Rally as labelled.

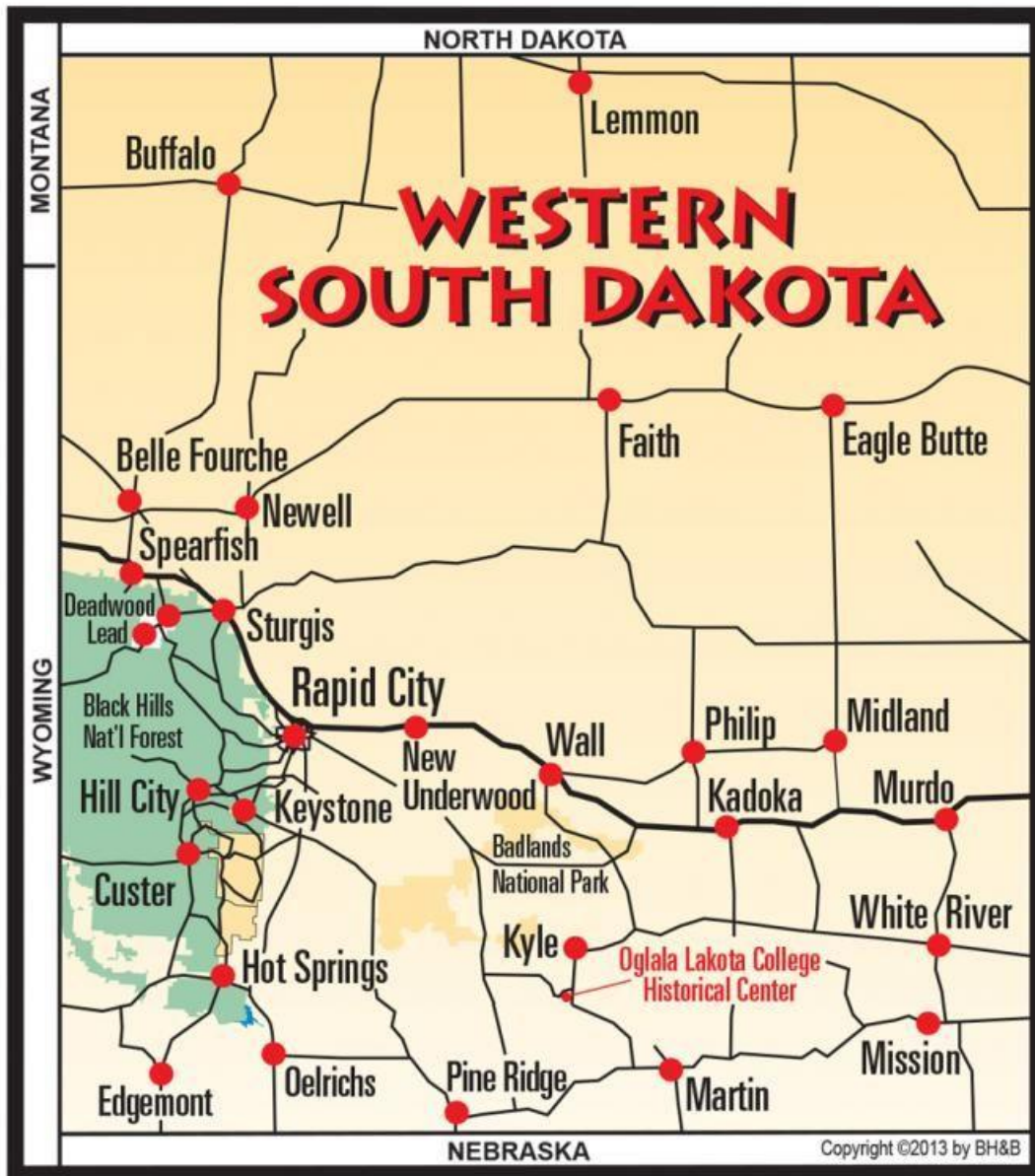


BADLANDS

Sturgis Rally Image 1 (Downloaded) – Visiting the Badlands when at Sturgis is not to be missed!



HOG Ride Image 2 – Also in the carpark we see from left: Ashley (in background), Dave, Rob, Smiddy (Ian), Belle, Tarzan (Steven), and Cappa (Warwick), all very well acquainted with each other.

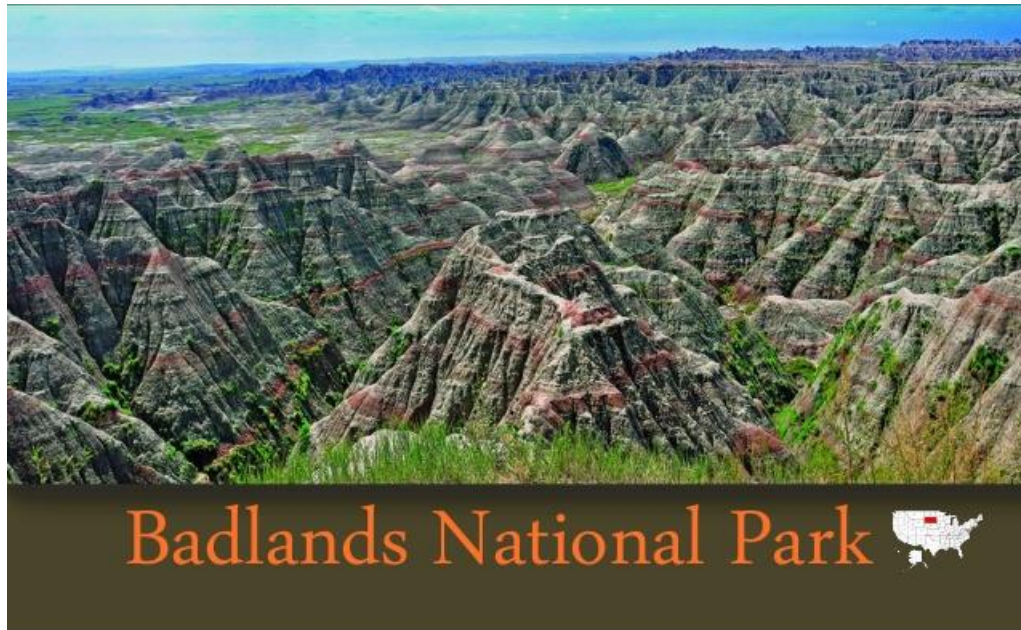


Sturgis Rally Image 2 (Downloaded) – On this map you can see where the Badlands are in relation to Sturgis and Rapid City.

It was the Native Americans who named this area “mako sica” meaning “land bad”.



HOG Ride Image 3 – It looks like a good turnout today and also joining in the fun is Rocket (Rodney) (at left) with Priest (Frederick), Priest is the road name).



Sturgis Rally Image 3 (Downloaded) – Authorised by Congress in 1929, the Badlands National Monument was established to preserve the scenery, to protect the fossils and wildlife, and to conserve the mixed-grass prairie. It covers an area of 244,000 acres.



HOG Ride Image 4 – Now let's meet Ashley with Sarma in front of their 2017 Street Glide model.



Sturgis Rally Image 4 (Downloaded) – Often described as a lunar-like landscape, even bizarre, this alien rugged terrain draws visitors from around the world. In fact these striking geologic deposits contain one of the world's richest fossil beds.

This is desolation at its truest where you can look for miles and see no sign of civilisation.

The formation of the Badlands is a result of two processes: deposition and erosion. The deposits are varying sorts of clays, silts and sands built up over a 47-million year period resulting in clear, distinct layers of sediment. It is believed that a shallow, inland sea stretched across the Great Plains during the Cretaceous period (68 to 77 million years ago). This inland sea eventually drained away leaving the sedimentary materials subject to erosion by wind and water. A flood plain eventually replaced the sea, and each time the rivers flooded, they deposited a new layer of sediment on the plain.

Also clearly evident is the lack of vegetation.



HOG Ride Image 5 – This is Allan with his 2017 Road King, his 3rd Harley. Allan has been a HOG member since 2013 and he also organises the mid-week rides for anyone interested.



Sturgis Rally Image 5 – On our approach to the Badlands and about 50 miles from Rapid City we pass through a ghost town named Scenic. This once cowboy town is now abandoned and empty. Here we see the remnants of the Longhorn Saloon the front of which is festooned with animal skulls (above the roof).



HOG Ride Image 6 – Here we see Brendon with daughter Kaia in front of their 2013 Fat Boy model. This is Brendon's second Harley and he is a recently joined HOG member.



Sturgis Rally Image 6 – Still in front of the Longhorn Saloon and showing the main street, Scenic is eerily quiet and a bit spooky.



HOG Ride Image 7 – Time is approaching for our 10 am departure and so the Lead Road Captain for today gives his address regarding route, destination, and safety protocol. It's a good turn out with over 40 members and 4 visitors (non-members).



Sturgis Rally Image 7 – Inside the Longhorn Saloon we see the floor is covered thick in sawdust and the interior is reasonably intact.



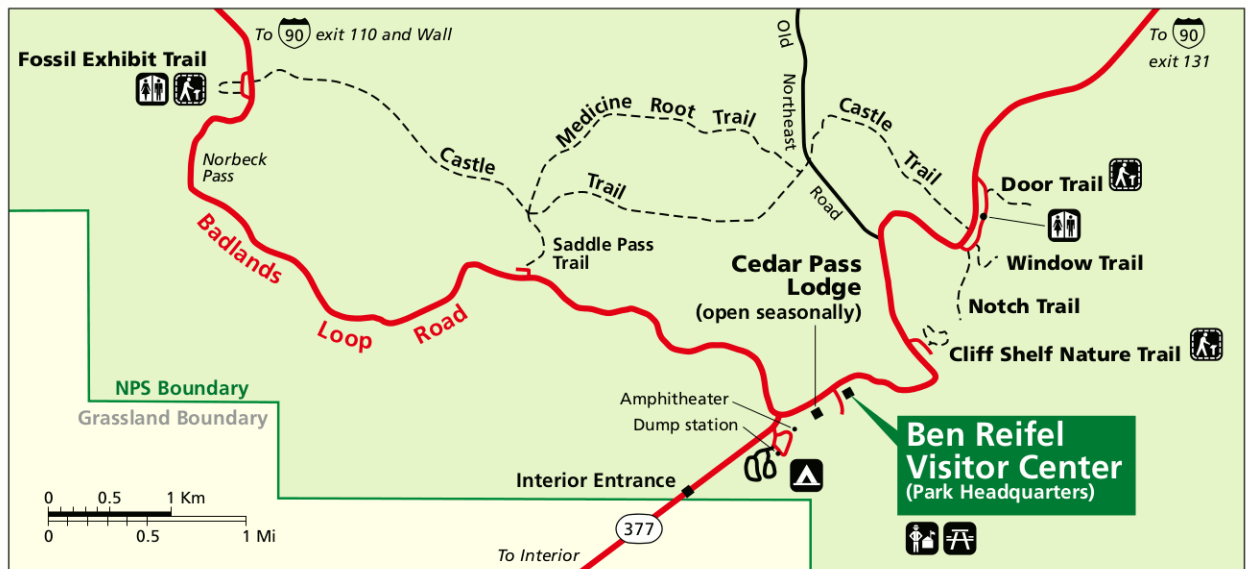
HOG Ride Image 8 – Lead Road Captain for today is Grum (Grahame), seen here giving his address to all in attendance.



Sturgis Rally Image 8 – The walls, furniture and ceilings of the Longhorn Saloon are now covered by graffiti.



HOG Ride Image 9 – This is Jean and Paul (closest to camera) taking in the message from Grum.



Sturgis Rally Image 9 (Downloaded) – We are headed for the Badlands Loop Road (South Dakota Highway 240 or SD 240) which runs through the eastern portion of the Badlands National Park. The total length of SD 240 is only 40 miles (64 kms) but it is one of the most recognised routes in the country, consistently placed in the “Top Ten” of scenic drives. It extends from the towns of Cactus Flat to Wall. This drive could take only about 1 hour non-stop but nobody would do that as there are 16 designated lookout points offering great photo opportunities.



HOG Ride Image 10 – The fun starts with the sound of over 40 Harleys ready to go. Music to my ears!



Sturgis Rally Image 10 – Passing through the Badlands Wilderness Area we are hoping to encounter Buffalo (also known as American Bison). You are welcome to team up with any biker group heading in the same direction.



HOG Ride Image 11 – As usual, we wait for a favourable break in the traffic to leave in one cohesive group. We immediately take the M4 on-ramp just outside of Frasers.



Sturgis Rally Image 11 – We are lucky enough to encounter a group of Buffalo today. Because they roam great distances their location can never be certain.

Buffalo once ranged through North America in almost unfathomable numbers – possibly as many as 60 million – but they were almost exterminated in the 1800's by wanton hunting. Fewer than 1,000 remained when the 20th Century dawned. Since then, the North American buffalo population has rebounded to almost 500,000 thanks to conservation efforts.



HOG Ride Image 12 – We reach our first set of traffic lights which will split the group.



Sturgis Rally Image 12 – If you are patient enough and don't make too much noise, the Buffalo will eventually come close enough but tourists are forbidden from approaching these animals. Being wild animals they can be unpredictable and they can attack at more than 30mph – faster than you can run! Usain Bolt, the world's fastest man runs the 100 m at about 40 km/hr which is only 25 mph!



HOG Ride Image 13 – Bikes in front of me, bikes behind me. Fantastic!



Sturgis Rally Image 13 – I zoom in with my camera as two Buffalo pass nearby – battering rams on hooves! That was fantastic!



HOG Ride Image 14 – Road Captain Tarzan (Steven) marks a corner so those following split from the lead group know where to turn. All turns are marked by Road Captains ahead of the Pack.



Sturgis Rally Image 14 – All of a sudden the monotonous grasslands transforms into the vast, rugged landscape most recognisable as part of the Badlands.



HOG Ride Image 15 – Stopped at traffic lights allows time for a quick photo. Here we see Kelly on her Fat Boy Lo model.



Sturgis Rally Image 15 – One of the many designated lookout points along SD 240. During the Sturgis Rally there are plenty of motorcycles about to further enhance your photos!



HOG Ride Image 16 – Its constant stop-start through the Sydney traffic which further splits our group.



Sturgis Rally Image 16 – My 3 ride buddies for today are best friends from Wisconsin who do the ride to Sturgis annually.

The serrated ridges and deep canyons of the Badlands did not exist until about 500,000 years ago, when wind and rushing water began to cut through the layers of rock, gouging out gulley's and carving cliffs and spires. This then exposed ancient fossils which had been buried for millions of years. In fact, the Badlands are one of the richest fossil beds known to exist. Every time rain falls more sediment is washed away revealing ever more fossils dating from 28 million to 37 million years ago. Remains of three-toed horses, dog-size camels, sabre-toothed cats, giant pigs, and other species have been found here.



HOG Ride Image 17 – Not far from our destination we stop at a convenient and safe place to quickly regroup.



Sturgis Rally Image 17 – I travel light and did not take much biker gear with me but that doesn't matter at the Sturgis Rally because the weather is great and Helmet wearing is not enforced in South Dakota. Putting common sense aside, it was a nice experience riding free as the wind!



HOG Ride Image 18 – Our destination for today, the Sugar Salt restaurant at Galston.

Galston is a rural suburb located 36 km NW of Sydney. It has a population of around 3,000 people.



Sturgis Rally Image 18 – All along SD 240 during the Sturgis Rally you will find groups of bikers and all are so friendly. If you're on a bike you are part of the family!



HOG Ride Image 19 – Now we have time to meet Jeff with his 2014 CVO Road King model.



Sturgis Rally Image 19 – These Harley-Davidson Ultra Classic touring bikes are most popular around these parts.



HOG Ride Image 20 – It's a bit busy inside so a few gather outside the restaurant to wait their turn.



Sturgis Rally Image 20 – What a great scene, the Badlands and Harley-Davidsons!

The Badlands Loop Road offers twisting curves that climb and descend around a lunar-like landscape. This is one of those roads that motorcycle riders love so much that it has been featured in driving video games.



HOG Ride Image 21 – Now we see Spielberg (Michael) with his 2015 Ultra model, his 5th Harley. He has been a HOG member for 7 years. The colour of his bike is called Whiskey Amber!



Sturgis Rally Image 21- This looks interesting so we stop by for a look.



HOG Ride Image 22 – Now meet Kaustav with his 2015 Roadster model, his first Harley. He has been a HOG member for about a year now.



Sturgis Rally Image 22 – The car park at the Ben Reifel Visitor Centre and we have time for a quick snack.

Check out all the bikes!



HOG Ride Image 23 – Enjoying a chat are from left Lindsay, Jono, Steve and Richard.



Sturgis Rally Image 23 - We enter the Ben Reifel Visitor Centre. Here they show educational films and exhibits, and there are models illustrating the geology and palaeontology of the Badlands.



HOG Ride Image 24 – We love our group photos so here we all are in front of the restaurant with some restaurant staff members. We are always well received wherever we go.



Sturgis Rally Image 24 – Inside the Ben Reifel Visitor Centre showing part of the exhibits. There is also a book and souvenir shop inside the building.



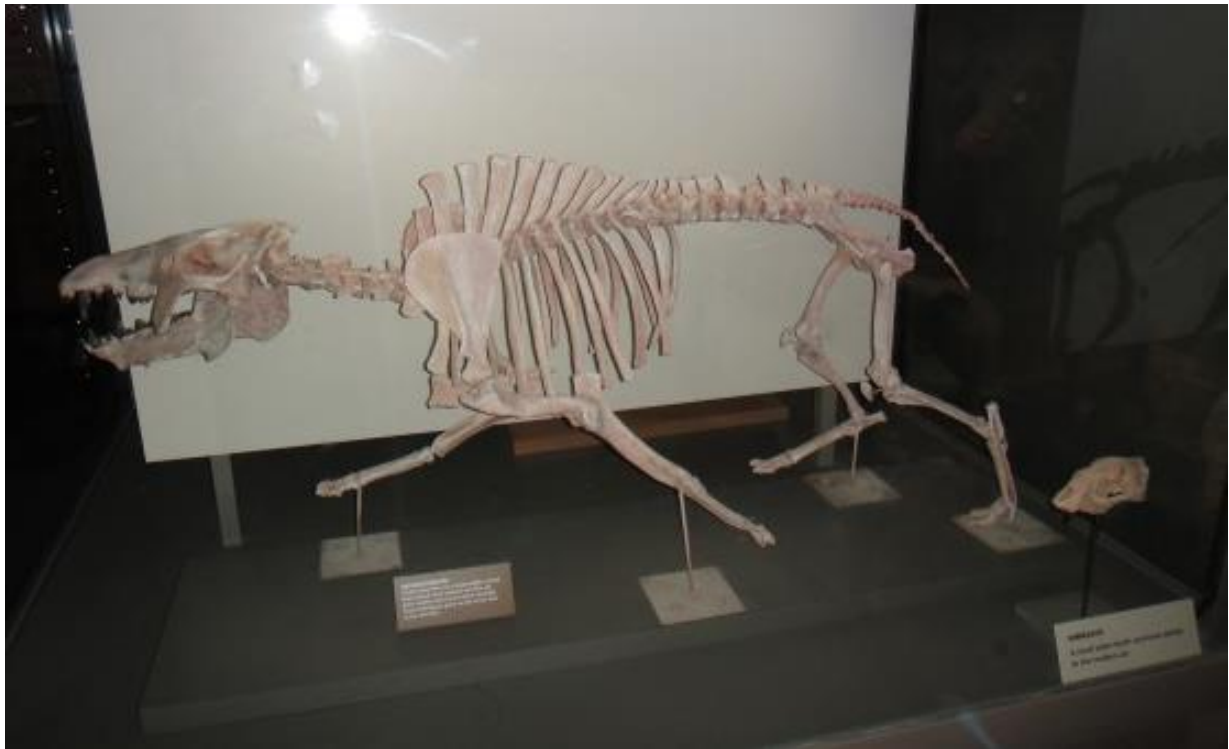
HOG Ride Image 25 – Our ride today does not end at the destination as we are all heading back to Frasers for the Christmas Carpark party. Here Grum informs on the return route and assembly point just across the road.



Sturgis Rally Image 25 – This very enthusiastic and knowledgeable Ranger by the name of Ed Welsh gave us the run down on the place.



HOG Ride Image 26 – After leaving the restaurant we regroup in the adjacent dead end street so we can all leave together.



Sturgis Rally Image 26 – Visiting the Ben Reifel Visitor Centre is like taking a Science Class. Here we see a replica fossil as found in the Badlands. Millions more lay undiscovered and are slowly being revealed as weathering of the now dry, fragile soil continues. Visitors using the hiking trails often alert the relevant authorities of newly revealed fossils.

Fossil of clams, ammonites, and sea reptiles confirm the sea environment that once existed here.



HOG Ride Image 27 – Approaching Castle Hill on our return trip you notice allot of development going on as you see throughout the Sydney metropolitan area.



Sturgis Rally Image 27 – The Badlands have been so ruthlessly ravaged by wind and water that it has become picturesque.



HOG Ride Image 28 – On our return to Frasers the group has been fragmented again by traffic lights so we pull over along James Ruse Drive to regroup. It's more fun riding in a tight pack.



Sturgis Rally Image 28 – There are many hiking trails in the Badlands despite the presence of rattlesnakes. Also found here are bighorn sheep, prairie dogs, black-footed ferrets and numerous birds.



HOG Ride Image 29 – Whilst awaiting others to catch up Priest (Frederick) walks about giving all his blessings.



Sturgis Rally Image 29 – Houston, we are on the moon, over!



HOG Ride Image 30 – Here they are gathering up at the rear.



Sturgis Rally Image 30 – Erosion has revealed the horizontal differently coloured sedimentary bands which are much like a time machine representing millions of years of deposition.



HOG Ride Image 31 – The view from my bike, it's a 2016 Heritage Softail Classic.



Sturgis Rally Image 31 – We now exit the Badlands National Park and head to the nearby historic town of Wall.



HOG Ride Image 32 – Well that ride was short and sweet! Now let's check out the Harley merchandise in Frasers with everything 20% off to HOG members for today only.



Sturgis Rally Image 32 – Here is a surprise find. Not far from the location shown in Sturgis Rally Image 31 is the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site. This site was a key part of the US defence strategy during the Cold War with the USSR. From here could be launched an intercontinental ballistic missile which was part of the triad of air – land – and sea based nuclear weapons forming the missile defense system. These missiles could be launched from underground launch facilities (underground missile silos) and be launched remotely. The missiles could travel over the North Pole and arrive at a target in less than 30 minutes! Their explosive equivalent was over a million tons of dynamite! They were maintained at a constant state of readiness.

If there was a nuclear attack on the US during the Cold War, these missiles would have been launched.

This site was once off limits to civilians and of course today there are no active Minuteman silos in South Dakota.

It is said that this facility was more a nuclear deterrent which helped maintain peace and prevented war.



HOG Ride Image 33 – Arriving back to Frasers after the ride is Brendon with daughter Kaia.



Sturgis Rally Image 33 – This was part of the exhibit in the missile historic site.

This missile field was shut down in 1991 as part of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. In 1999 the Historic Site was established with this new building, being dedicated exclusively to the Cold War.

This place provides an opportunity to explore the history and significance of the nuclear arms race.



HOG Ride Image 34 – Doing some shopping in Frasers is Tarzan (Steven) with daughter Belle. In 2017 Belle has taken her riding skills to new heights and may have a promising future in motorcycling sports.



Sturgis Rally Image 34 – Still inside the missile historic site. This says “Only the President of the United States can authorize a strategic missile launch. If launch orders were issued, less than 5 minutes would be required to complete the Minuteman II launch sequence”.



HOG Ride Image 35 – HOG members at the Christmas Party enjoying a drink before lunch is served.



Sturgis Rally Image 35 – A downloaded image of the Badlands at sunset. Visually, the Badlands are at their most picturesque early or late in the day when deep shadows define their form.



HOG Ride Image 36 – Relishing the party atmosphere are from left Louise, Sylvia, Peter and Fifi.



Sturgis Rally Image 36 - Just outside the Badlands is the historic town of Wall and they have their very own Harley-Davidson dealership. Inside it was quite busy with visiting bikers during the Sturgis Rally.



HOG Ride Image 37 – Enjoying the Christmas feed is from left Jungle (George), Shieldsey (Brook), Grum (Grahame) and Jono.



Sturgis Rally Image 37 –Seen here is the very famous Wall Drug Store originally bought by pharmacist Ted Hustead and his wife Dorothy in 1931. It has grown into a huge cowboy-themed shopping mall/department store. It was a fun place to visit.

As mentioned previously, the hundreds of thousands of bikers visiting South Dakota for the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally are spread all over the place and here too in Wall you will see motorcycles everywhere. Fantastique!



HOG Ride Image 38 – Here we see U-Leak (Victor) with partner Velvet enjoying the party.



Sturgis Rally Image 38 – The pharmacy museum inside the Wall Drug store.



HOG Ride Image 39 – Selling HOG merchandise at the Christmas Party are Craig and Kelly with Cappa (Warwick) at right making a purchase.



Sturgis Rally Image 39 – Back in 1931, business wasn't exactly booming at the Wall drug store so the pharmacist's wife Dorothy hit upon a great idea: *free ice water for travellers*. It's not the sort of notion we look on today as brilliant, but back then, it not only saved Wall Drug, but it turned the place into Hustead's personal gold rush. Drivers moving through this town during the hot summer months to visit the newly opened Mount Rushmore Memorial not far away loved what was then this new idea of free ice water. They'd stop for the water, replenish their energy with a hot meal, and buy amenities they needed. From there, Wall Drug grew into a cowboy-themed shopping mall/department store.

Tradition lives on and ice water is still free for all visitors so here I am getting my free ice water! You help yourself to the ice from that bucket and then the water from that tap at left. Very nice on a warm day! Dorothy was right!



HOG Ride Image 40 – There was plenty of food to go around with desserts to follow.



Sturgis Rally Image 40 – Behind the Wall Drug Store are fun areas for kids of all ages. This stuffed buffalo allows you to get up close to one and feel their fur coat. They are obviously very powerful animals that you wouldn't want to approach in the wild.

Well that was a top day in the Badlands with a memorable ride and with a Science Class and History Class thrown in!



HOG Ride Image 41 – I'm sure everyone enjoyed their ride and catch-up with ride buddies as well as the Christmas feed put on by Frasers and the HOGS.