

# USMC Birthday Ride



Uncles Jerry, Larry "Buck" and Terry with Mom and Aunt Jackie

As a tribute to my uncles that were U.S. Marines, I decided to honor them with an Iron Butt Saddle Sore 1000 (at least 1,000 miles within 24 hours) ride on the 245<sup>th</sup> birthday of the U.S. Marine Corps. My Mom's brother, Larry "Buck" Behr 5/21/36 – 4/8/81 (aged 44) was buried in Fairmount, Indiana at Park Cemetery. Her other two brothers, Jerry Behr 12/22/40 – 3/10/12 (aged 71) and Terry Behr 6/13/43 – 12/6/13 (aged 70). were buried in Marion, Indiana at Marion National Cemetery.

*From Wikipedia:*

*The official birthday of the United States Marine Corps is on 10 November 1775. That was the day*

*when the Second Continental Congress established the Continental Marines with the following decree:*

*That two battalions of Marines be raised consisting of one Colonel, two lieutenant-colonels, two majors and other officers, as usual in other regiments; that they consist of an equal number of privates as with other battalions, that particular care be taken that no persons be appointed to offices, or enlisted into said battalions, but such as are good seamen, or so acquainted with maritime affairs as to be able to serve for and during the present war with Great Britain and the Colonies; unless dismissed by*

*Congress; that they be distinguished by the names of the First and Second Battalions of Marines.*



I was up and out of the house by 1:45 am that Tuesday morning. I rode down to the local Shell station for my beginning receipt. Official start time 1:58 am.

The temperature was 67 degrees as I headed north out of Hernando, very nice for this time of year! And, the expected temperatures throughout the trip were forecasted to be above normal.

Traffic was light as I rode through Memphis and crossed the Mississippi River over into Arkansas. I had an uneventful ride up through Missouri and into Illinois where I had my first fuel stop in Marion, IL. From there, I continued north through Effingham, IL then on to Indiana. The temperature did dip down to 64 degrees. Perfect temperatures for all the riding gear that I wear!

I continued on until I stopped for gas just before entering the

Indianapolis metro area. Now, it's 9:30 am. Rush hour is over. I breeze through Indy. A rare occurrence!



I make it up to my hometown of Fairmount, Indiana in exactly 8 hours. I stop at the local Village Pantry to top off my fuel tank and get a DBR (Dated Business Receipt) as documentation that I was actually here. I will be visiting my Uncle Buck's gravesite at Park Cemetery just down the road.

While fueling up, my sister, Pam, calls. My Bluetooth is disconnected with the bike shut-off, so I can't answer the phone. I call her back. Her and her husband, Art, are at Ivanhoe's (a popular local ice cream/sandwich shop) in Upland, IN waiting on me for lunch! I ride over to Park Cemetery first, to pay my respects to Uncle Buck.

Uncle Buck's grave is located in Section S of Park Cemetery. Fortunately for me, maps of these cemeteries can be found online. Plus, with the help of Pam scouting it out for me, it was easy to find! So, I head north on S 150 E to the last entrance road to the cemetery and go up three sections to S. His gravesite is there by the road in

plain sight next to his Dad/my Grandpa, Wayne Behr.



At Uncle Buck's gravesite, I leave a shiny penny to symbolize that I visited him.



*When you see a coin on the grave of a serviceman or woman, this is a sign that another member of the military paid their respects recently. According to tradition, there is a meaning behind each type of coin. Here is a simple breakdown:*

**Penny** - *A penny at the gravesite means you visited.*

**Nickel** - *A nickel is left if you and the deceased person trained at boot camp together.*

**Dime** - *In the case of a dime, you served with the deceased person in some capacity.*

**Quarter** - *Finally, a quarter indicates you were with the deceased when he or she died.*

I have great memories of Uncle Buck. Especially, visiting his family in Marion when I was a child. Uncle Buck left us early at the young age of 44 years old. Today was a time to reminisce!

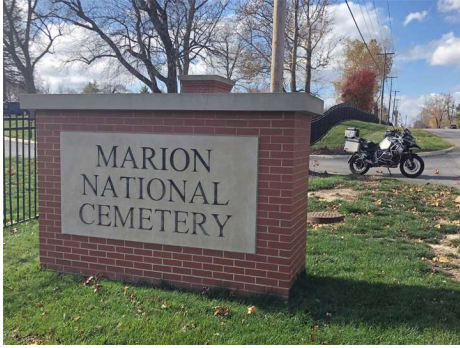
From there, I head over to Ivanhoe's which is a family business owned by one of my childhood friends, Mark Slain.



I enjoy a quick visit with Pam and Art. Pam had just been given the all clear after going through chemo therapy this past year for breast cancer. She is a fighter and survivor! She looked great! I am so thankful for that!

Breaded tenderloin sandwiches are a staple in Indiana, so of course that is what I ate! Surprisingly, it was a slow day in Ivanhoe's. The local University is off on holiday break or this place would be crowded!

After lunch, I head to Marion National Cemetery to visit Uncle Jerry and Uncle Terry's gravesites.



I am visiting my uncles in order by age, so Uncle Jerry would be next. He is located in Section 112, Row 12.

Again, I reminisce about about Uncle Jerry and his family. Uncle Jerry was the black sheep of the family, but he did the best he could.



I leave a penny on his headstone out of respect.



Next, I find Uncle Terry's headstone. He is located in Section 13, Row 3.

Again, I reminisce about his families and Christmases together with our family. He was always the jokester!



I leave a penny on his headstone too.



After my visit, I stop at the nearest gas station for another DBR as proof that I was in Marion, Indiana. Now, I head south to Mississippi.

My route home was a little different. I rode south to Louisville, KY, then through Nashville and on to Hernando, Mississippi. This route is only 20 miles farther than the route I took to get there.

It had warmed up to 80 degrees by the time I rode back through Indianapolis! Great weather until Kentucky. From Elizabethtown, KY to Nashville, TN was rain. It started off light, then intensified the

closer I got to Nashville. Also, very cloudy and dark!

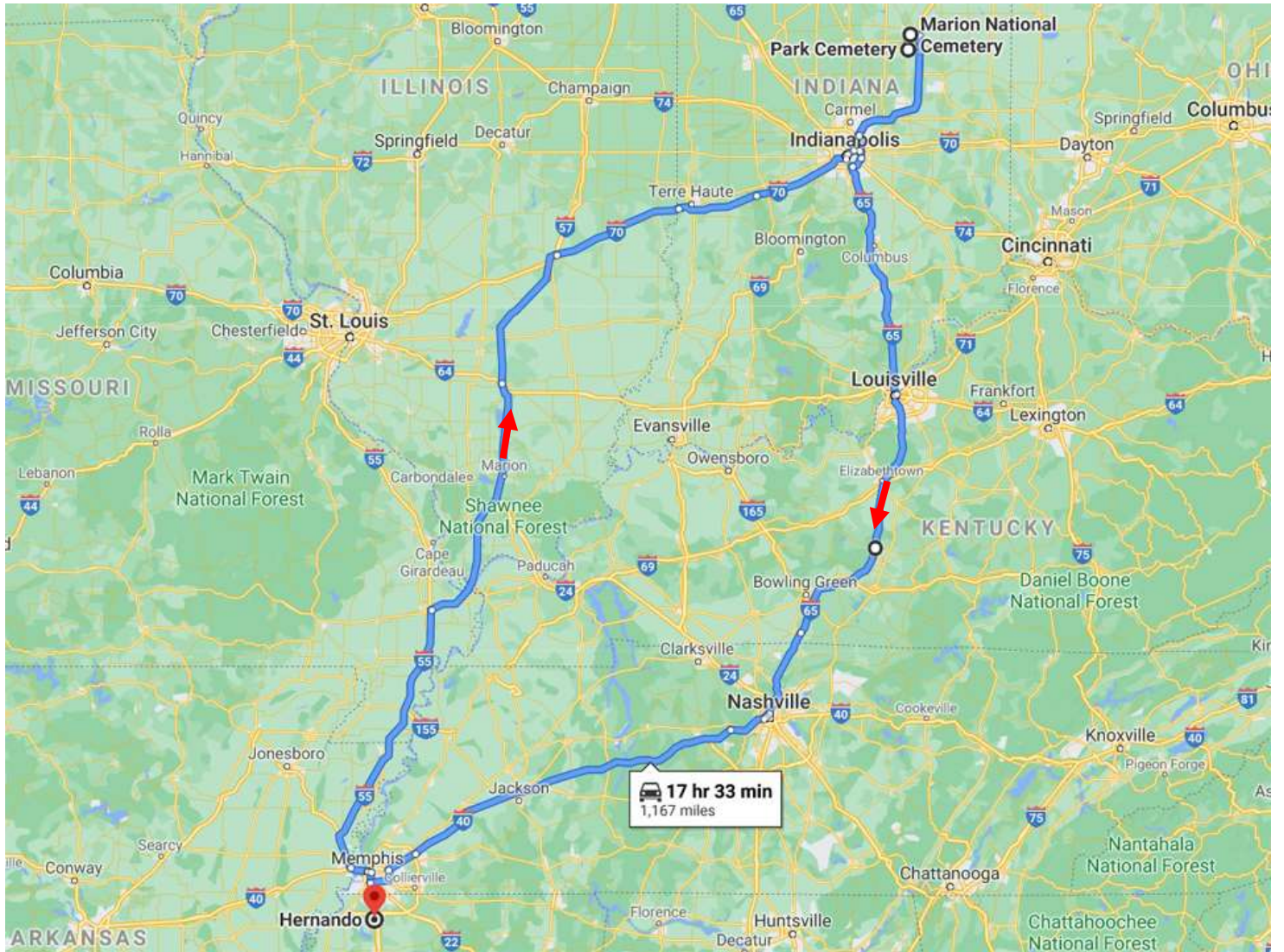
I entered Nashville around 5:00 pm. Traffic was heavy, so I took the Briley Parkway around to I-40. No problems at all except for the wet conditions. Once I got 30 miles south of Nashville the traffic thinned out quit a bit. Life is good!

I stopped at the Log Cabin Restaurant at the Hurricane Mills exit for dinner. It was a busy place at 6:30 pm. But, I got seated and served rather quickly. From there, it's only two hours home.

I arrived in Hernando at 9:28 pm. Exactly 19 1/2 hours from when I left this morning. Total mileage on the odometer was 1,180 miles.

It was a great day for a ride that allowed me to reminisce about my uncles. Service to our country in the Armed Forces is something that I have in common with them. They make me very proud and I miss all three!

<b>USMC Birthday SS1000</b>
Distance: 1,180 miles
Time: 19 hrs, 30 min.
Average Speed: 60 mph
Fuel Used: 34.873 gal
Fuel Mileage: 33 mpg
Low Temperature: 64°
High Temperature: 80°



**My Route**