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Motor Maid writes of her motorcycle adventures



Christine Austin takes a break in Ponoka during her summer trek across the United States and Canada Aug. 8 with motorcycle.

Photo by Jeffrey Heyden-Kaye

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By [Jeffrey Heyden-Kaye - Ponoka News](#)

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The open road. It conjures up images of freedom and independence, no one tells you what to do, you write your own destiny and make your own schedule. Most of us may not take a cross-country trip in our lifetime so reading about it is the next best thing.

This is what a former Ponoka resident is doing. Christine Austin, a.k.a. Anne Fernie, has taken her Yamaha V-Star 1100 motorbike from Wilmot, N.S. for the Motor Maids annual convention in Spartanburg, S.C. this summer.

Started in 1940, Motor Maids is an organization for women bikers in North America with more than 1,200 members.

She decided to travel through the United States and back into Canada into her hometown of Ponoka and she has been telling the stories of her trip through an Internet blog.

It was seeing an 87-year-old woman who still rides at a Motor Maids convention recently that helped her decide to get more into the hobby. "That was the inspiration for me to start riding more."

The trip has given Austin a chance to see the country and travel more than 12,000 kilometres once she stopped in Ponoka. A much needed maintenance check on the Yamaha was planned before she headed out to Drumheller for a bike rally. She always takes the side roads and she has met several other biker women on the trip.

"It was just spontaneous...I'm learning so much about travelling," she said.

Part of the learning comes in using smartphone technology to update her blog, which is done via email from the phone.

One of the reasons Austin rides is to be able to shut off the world around her and to give her a chance not to worry about everyday challenges.

"Once I get on a bike and start riding the smell is so vivid."

Her hope from the blog and her travels is for other women to try riding and to help each other. She feels it will help boost their confidence.

"Women really need to get in touch with supporting other women."

Her husband, who also rides, has been her biggest supporter.

Check out Austin's blog with photos and updates at: <http://blog.travelpod.com/travel-blog/chris-austin/1/tpod.html>