

Gold Wing Road Riders Association

Virginia Chapter D History

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(Life Member)



In The Beginning:

A small group of interested Gold Wing owners met at Earl and Cathy Banton's house in the summer of 1984 to start what was to become the 4th Gold Wing Road Riders Association Chapter in Virginia. Their first meeting was held on Sunday, July 15, 1984 at 3:00 pm with a pot luck supper for the 12 new "CHARTER MEMBERS" of "Chapter D". One year later in July 1985 the Chapter had grown to 58 members. The Chapter "D" staff was organized in 1985. The Chapter was originally organized by Earl & Cathy Banton, and Earl became its first "Area Representative" (now Chapter Director). In September 1987 Earl resigned and took on a new position as Virginia State Director, which he held until December 1992. The following have led the chapter since Earl stepped down:

Chapter Directors:

September 1987	Leon & Dottie Headley
October 1990	Don & Pam Coats
August 1991	Tommy & Ginny Broughton
January 1993	David & Lois Nichols
January 1997	Calvin & Linda Hall
January 1998	Steve and Linda Whitmer
January 2001	Kathy Hooper
October 2001	Chris Hooper
January 2004	Steve & Diane Flournoy
January 2006	Ted & Ethel Nelmes
January 2009	Chris & Kathy Hooper
April 2010	Rich & Debbie Bonham

Assistant Chapter Directors

Don & Pam Coats
Tommy & Ginny Broughton
David & Lois Nichols
Jerry & Gretchen Phinney
Calvin & Linda Hall - 1996
Steve & Linda Whitmer
Al & Debbie Dowell
Ricky & Colleen Dean - 1999
Kathy Hooper - 2000
Steve & Diane Flournoy - 2003
Ted & Ethel Nelmes - 2005
Vernon & Brenda Cook - 2008
Vernon & Brenda Cook - 2008
Rich & Debbie Bonham - 2009
Vernon & Brenda Cook - 2008

Before January 1995, GWRRA had 9 Regions in the USA and 3 Regions in Canada. After January 1, 1995, the USA now has 13 Regions and maintains the Regions in Canada. Virginia District, which had previously been in Region B is now a member of the newly created Region N family along with districts in West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

Chapter D "FIRSTS" include:

First Group Ride - October 20, 1984, a ride on Skyline Drive.
First Rally - October 1984, Virginia State Rally at Haymarket, VA.
First "Hands-on" Bike Clinic - Fall 1984.
First Teddy Bear Run - November 1984
First Christmas Party - December 1984, at Earl & Cathy's home.
First Picnic/Fundraiser/Mini Rally - June 25, 1985 at the Americamps Campground in Ashland, an all day affair featuring vendors, pinstripers, trailer displays, food, and a country & western band.
First Chapter Queen & VA State Queen - 1984 - Margaret Burkett.
First Wing Ding - June 1985 - Knoxville, Tennessee.
First Bike Show - March 1985, Blue Knights Motorcycle Expo, Richmond Arena. First Parade - October 5, 1985, at the West Point Crab Festival & Parade.
First Ride on the Track at South Boston Speedway - June 1987 before the race. First Halloween Party - October 1988 at the home of Bob & Carol Witherspoon.
First Taste of Bike Week - March 1988 some Chapter members visit Daytona for sun, sand, cycles and scantily clad women.
First Virginia State Couple - October 1988 Jane and Vernon Vanderloecht became the first State Couple for Virginia.
First Wingless Weekend - January 1989, Kings Quarters at Kings Dominion.
First Poker Run - August 1990, at Cycle Connection of Virginia to benefit MDA.
First Rivah Rally & Fish Fry - Summer 1997 at Jamaica, VA

Chapter Queen & Couples of the Year:

Chapter "D" is the home of the last "Wing Ding Queen," Cathy Banton who started as Chapter Queen, rose to level of State Queen at the Virginia State Rally, then went on to the Region as Region "B" Queen and competed and won at the top level as Wing Ding Queen at Wing Ding in Knoxville, Tennessee in August 1985. Chapter Couples competition started in 1986. Our first Chapter Couple, Jane & Vernon Vanderloecht went on to win the title of Virginia State Couple in 1987. A couple is selected each year to represent Chapter "D" at the Virginia District Rally and they compete for the title of Virginia District Couple. Chapter D couples who have participated in the past are:

1988-89 - Larry & Marie Crow	1989-90 - Tommy & Ginny Broughton
1990-91 - Jerry & Judy Lamberth & Virginia State Couple	
1991-92 - David & Lois Nichols	1992-93 - Steve & Linda Whitmer
1993-94 - Ray & Coralee Baker	1994-95 - Teddy & Diane Johnson
1995-96 - Calvin Hall & Linda Carter	1996-97 - Sir Dave & Linda Grubbs
1997-98 - Al & Debbie Dowell	1998-99 - Bill & Chiffon Robinson
1999-2000 - Eric & Debbie Albert	2000-01 - Fred & Florence Tayler
2001-02 - Chuck & JoAnn Spain	2002-03 - Ted & Ethel Nelmes
2003-04 - Steve & Diane Flournoy	2004-05 - Marty & Lawanna Link
2005-06 - Vernon & Brenda Cook	2006-07 - Bob & Hope Carneal
2007-08 - Chris & Kathy Hooper	2008-09 - Billy & Lee Russell
	2009-2010 - Les & Kelly Critton

Rally Participation:

Since Chapter "D's" infancy, we have enjoyed participating in rally's of all sizes, particularly the Virginia State Rally's held annually in October. The list includes:

1984 - Haymarket, Virginia
 1985 - Hampton, Virginia - Chamberlain Hotel
 1986 - Doswell, Virginia - Kings Quarters at Kings Dominion
 1987 - Alexandria, Virginia - Holiday Inn
 1988 - Virginia Beach, Virginia - Pavilion Twin Towers
 1989 – 1990 Roanoke, Virginia - Roanoke Civic Center
 1991 – 2008 Salem, Virginia - Salem Civic Center

Early Chapter Christmas Parties:

Chapter "D" has always been a group that enjoys a good time whether it's riding the highways or gathering for the annual Christmas party. The annual Christmas parties have always been extra special and are attended by members of Chapters from around the state. After the group had outgrown the "homes of its members" it was decided that we needed a facility large enough to accommodate everyone who wanted to share in a little Christmas cheer. Our first Christmas Party away from "home" was at the North Chamberlayne Recreation Center in Northside and we had a pot luck supper, music and dancing. The succeeding years brought even bigger and better parties to include the Belly Dancers in 1987, the Womanless Wedding in 1988 and the Holly Follies Dance Revue in 1989. And who can forget the annual visit from that jolly ol' elf himself, Santa along with his Missus, who help distribute Christmas gifts to all.

Chapter Charity Involvement:

Chapter D has always been involved in fundraising for charities and volunteering for charity events. Some of them are:

1986 - *Make A Wish Foundation*. A cottage for terminally ill children and their families to stay while visiting Disney World and other attractions around Orlando.

1986 – *Muscular Dystrophy Association*. Volunteered for their yearly telethon.

1990 - *Sgt. Santa*. Toys for the children and money for Christmas gifts.

1997 - *Virginia Home for Boys*. Picnic and social event with the Corvette Club.

1998 - *McGuire VA Hospital*. Ice Cream Social & Bike Show.

National Pony Express Tour 1996, 1998, 2000, 2003 for cancer awareness.

2003 & ongoing – In the 2004 RIDE FOR KIDS charity ride, Chapter D and it's members were the 3rd largest group in raising funds (\$12,140) and Cycle Connection was the largest business fundraiser (\$19,320). Chris and Kathy Hooper were the Grand Champion individual fundraisers for 2004 (\$11,370). What a great team we have!

Ongoing: Homeless Hearts. Started in 1998 to collect personal care items for donation to local battered women's shelters or other charities.

Ongoing: American Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Powhatan, VA.

2004-05: Miles Jones Elementary School

2006: Relay for Life in Powhatan & From the Heart

2007: Northfield Foundation (Cumberland) & area Christmas Mothers

2008: Meals on Wheels, From the Heart, & area Christmas Mothers

Other Chapter Activities:

Many of our members have written articles published in GWRRA's Wing World.

Chris Hooper	"Charity, It's Not Just Giving Money" 2/95
Chris Hooper	"GWRRA Cowgirls Ride in 96 Pony Express Tour" 6/96
Chris Hooper	"Virginia Puts Out Welcome Mat" 7/95
Chris Hooper	"Virginia's Governor is One of Us" 8/97
Chris Hooper	"Tale of Two Tires" 12/97 & 2/98
Chris Hooper	"Those Who Have – Those Who Will", 3/98
Chris Hooper	"I was Bob's Wing", 1/99
Debbie Dowell	"Hakuna Matata" 6/96
Calvin Hall	"Bike Show Winner at Wing Ding" 6/95
Calvin Hall	"Calvin & Linda Win At Americade" 9/95
Linda Whitmer	"Why I Pay My Dues" 7/96
"Virginia's Star Attraction: The Rally in the Valley" published 9/95	

Chapter D went "high tech" in November 1997 with the creation of the chapter website at www.gwrrava.org/vad. Chris Hooper put together a wealth of information about the Chapter, the events going on, pictures and links to other good websites. In 2010 the site was revamped and moved to www.richmondwings.com with Rich Bonham as our new webmaster.

On December 19, 1997 the Division of Motor Vehicles in Virginia issued its first Disabled Parking License Plates. Chris Hooper along with VCOM and J. Thomas McGrath, proved that the existing Virginia Code does qualify motorcycles as a vehicle approved for disabled parking license plates.

In 1999 Kathy Hooper was named Region N "Educator of the Year". This is a great honor for Chapter D. In 2000 Chris Hooper was named "Spirit of Virginia" award recipient for the Virginia District at Rally in the Valley. This is another great honor for our Chapter. Congratulations to Chris and Kathy.

For several years Chapter D has promoted our motorcycle riding "rights" in Virginia by maintaining a sponsoring membership in the Virginia Coalition of Motorcyclists (VCOM) whose founder, Tom McGrath, is a member of GWRRA & Chapter D.

In Memoriam:

Herman Johnson - October 1989	George Haislip - June 1991
Art Seeley - September 1991	Louis & Audrey White - September 1991
Shirley Wood - November 1992	Jim Cook - May 1993
Roger Coleman - January 1995	Jerry Tyler - April 1997
Sharon Butler - August 1997	Margaret Headley - October 1998
Mickey Jenkins - April 2002	Steve Schwartz - May 2002
MacRae Powers - June 2003	Kim Powers - September 2003
Jean Leehy - October 2003	Eddie Crouse - May 2004
Harold "Pops" Horstman – April 2005	William "Bill" Hubbard – July 2005
Jeri Link Munden – November 2007	Jerry Bracey – December 2007
Ray Baker – January 2008	Toni Bruce - 2008
Jeanne Dixon – May 2008	Don Coats – April 2009
Beverly J. (BJ) Dixon – June 2009	Ken Yeomens – April 2010
Margaret (Peggy) Yeomens – June 2010	