



Economic Impact of Motorcycle Tourism in Port Dover and Norfolk County

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Prepared by:

Norfolk County
Tourism & Economic Development Division
30 Peel Street, Simcoe ON N3Y 1R9
(519) 426-9497

www.norfolkbusiness.ca / www.norfolktourism.ca / www.norfolkfarms.com

INTRODUCTION

On January 21, 2008, the question was asked of Guinness World Records if there was a record for the largest number of motorcycles at one event. According to their records, there was no attempt made in this category. And so the process began.

The Norfolk County Tourism and Economic Development Division set out to coordinate this attempt for the purposes of (i) putting Port Dover and Norfolk County on the world map and (ii) to determine the exact motorcycle attendance at PD13 of which we can make some calculations on expenditures, number of visits and other valuable data. Past estimations were that there were no more than 10,000 motorcycles.

Guinness World Records accepted our attempt in April 2008. Port Dover would be the first ever attempt for “Largest Parade of Motorcycles”. They gave Norfolk County a very precise criteria to follow including media support, photography and video verification, a specific counting process and more.

Throughout the process, Norfolk County staff were in constant contact with the PD13 Committee through Lynn Sonnenberg, the OPP (Larry Renton) and any relevant Norfolk County departments.

THE PROCESS

1. A numbered tag was designed to “officially” count each bike that came into town. This was part of the rules provided by Guinness.
2. Twelve thousand (12,000) tags were printed of which 11,982 were distributed directly to each motorcycle. Realizing the large number of motorcycles entering Port Dover, Norfolk County staff worked directly with the OPP to determine the best places for tagging motorcycles without jeopardizing safety. The recommended locations were (i) Main Street at Clifford Street (ii) Nelson Street/Radical Road at St. George St. (iii) Silver Lake Drive at Lynn Street and (iv) Hwy #6/Hamilton Plank Road at Grand Street, where the largest number of riders arrived. At least two people were stationed at each location beginning at 6 a.m. and were given 1,000-2,000 tags for each location.
3. Larger numbers of motorcycles began arriving at 9:00am. The Main Street/Clifford location exhausted their supply of tags by 10:30 a.m. The other spots ran out of tags by 11:30 a.m. and the final tags were given by 12:30 p.m. at the Hwy #6/Hamilton Plank Road location.
4. The “tag team” estimates that 7 of 10 motorcycles were tagged during the 6 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. timeframe. This suggests that approximately 3,600 motorcycles were not tagged due to speed, unwillingness to take tag or inability to reach them in a timely fashion.
5. The “tag team” also estimates that the motorcycle traffic arriving to Port Dover from 12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. was as busy as the peak time of 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. This is a

comparable timeframe and would suggest that another 12,000-15,600 motorcycles were present during the day, in addition to the 11,982 tagged.

6. A contest was added to the back of the tag to encourage the recipients to visit the Norfolk County Tourism website www.norfolktourism.ca to answer a series of questions and a chance to win a prize. They were asked for their contact information, email address, and response to a set number of strategic questions. These questions helped us to fulfill the primary objective of this initiative, that being to prepare this economic impact report.

Norfolk County received 1,632 responses to the on-line contest, which represents a 14% rate of return of the 11,982 tags.

SURVEY FINDINGS:

Of the 1,632 responses...

- Total expenditure for the day \$337,793
 - Average expenditure for day \$206 per person per day
 - Average night stay 0.8 nights
 - Average return trips per year 5 return trips
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COUNTRY OF ORIGIN...

- 94% travelled within Canada
 - 6% were from United States
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PROVINCE/STATE OF ORIGIN...

- 93% were from Ontario
 - 3% were from New York State
 - 1% were from Michigan State
 - 1% were from Quebec
 - 2% were from other areas
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CITY ORIGINS...

- 17% were from Mississauga, Toronto, Brampton area
- 14% were from Kitchener, Cambridge, Guelph region
- 10% were from Hamilton, Stoney Creek, Grimsby, Ancaster region
- 10% were from London/Woodstock
- 8% were from Brantford
- 7% were from London
- 7% were from Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Welland area
- 4% were from Windsor, Sarnia region
- 4% were from Norfolk County

- 3% were from Buffalo/Western New York
 - 16% were from other areas
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AREA CODES...

- 50% from 519 (London, Kitchener, Guelph, Cambridge, Sarnia, Woodstock, Stratford, Windsor)
 - 31% from 905 (Mississauga, Brampton, Burlington, Oakville, Hamilton, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls)
 - 7% from 416 (Toronto, Brampton, Scarborough, Mississauga, Orangeville)
 - 7% from 705 (Barrie, Peterborough, Huntsville)
 - 2.5% from 613 (Kingston, Ottawa)
 - 2.5% from 716 (New York State)
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OCCUPATIONS...

- 8% were retired
 - 6% were labourers or factory workers
 - 6% were truck drivers
 - 5% were in the automotive industry
 - 4% were self-employed business owners
 - 3% were electricians
 - 3% were contractors or in the construction field
 - 3% were administration
 - 3% were CEO's, Vice-Presidents or Managers
 - 59% were from various other occupations
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COMMENT HIGHLIGHTS...

- 66% of respondents took the time to add comments about why they travel to Norfolk County and what they like about this area. Below are the significant attractions...
1. Beaches and swimming was the overwhelming number one response
 2. "Riding the backroads", with many references to the beautiful scenery, clean air and countryside
 3. Dining at the many restaurants
 4. Shopping at unique shops
 5. Boating, camping and fishing were very important
 6. Noteworthy mentions were Simcoe Friendship Festival, Lighthouse Theatre and Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show
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WHO ATTENDED...

- **54% = DAYTRIPPERS** (no overnight stay) * **4% live in Norfolk County**
- **Survey sample size = 882 respondents**
- This group spent \$106,337 – an average of \$120.56 each per day
- They have attended an average of six PD13 events in the past
- They travel to Norfolk County an average of 5 times per year

- **22% = STAYED ONE NIGHT**
- **Survey sample size = 352 respondents**
- This group spent \$72,011 – an average of \$102.29 each per day (\$204.57 each per visit)
- They have attended an average of five PD13 events in the past
- They travel to Norfolk County an average of 5 times per year

- **19% = STAYED TWO NIGHTS**
- **Survey sample size = 309 respondents**
- This group spent \$109,175 – an average of \$117.77 each per day (\$353.18 each per visit)
- They have attended an average of six PD13 events in the past
- They travel to Norfolk County an average of 3 times per year

- **5% = STAYED THREE NIGHTS OR MORE**
- **Survey sample size = 89 respondents**
- This group spent \$50,270 – an average of \$141.21 each per day (\$564.83 each per visit)
- They have attended an average of six PD13 events in the past
- They travel to Norfolk County an average of 5 times per year

SUMMARY: SURVEY RESPONDENTS

- Total expenditure for the day \$337,793 from 1,632 survey respondents
- Average expenditure for day \$206 per person per day
- Average night stay 0.8 nights
- Average return trips per year 5 return trips

Because we acquired a very good response and cross-section of bikers, we can make some valuable assumptions based on their statistics, using the collected information:

ASSUMPTION #1... We tagged a total of **11,982** motorcycles. If we applied the same statistics to these bikers, we would realize...

- Total expenditure for the one day (Friday, June 13th, 2008) based on an average of \$206 per person for the 11,982 bikers would be **\$2,468,292**
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- **If the 54% = DAYTRIPPERS** returned 5-times per year (as reported)**
 - ** (assuming that the daytripper rates are inflated because of PD13 being an event, we will use the 2004 Average Expenditure as reported by Research Resolutions and Consulting at the rate of \$20 per person.)
 - =6,470 people who would contribute an additional \$647,000 to our economy every year
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- **If the remaining 46% of overnight visitors STAYED ONE NIGHT and returned 5 times per year at an average rate of \$199.04 per visit (as reported)**
 - =5,512 people who would contribute an additional \$5,485,542 to our economy every year
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SUMMARY: TAGGED BIKERS

These 11,982 bikers brought \$2,468,292 to this year's Friday the 13th event.

If they returned the reported number of daytrips and overnight stays to Norfolk County, they would contribute \$6,132,542 to the economy in 2008.

Therefore, including June 13, 2008 and return visits within 2008 by motorcycle operators, the total economic impact from the 11,982 tag bikers would be \$8,600,834 of motorcycle tourism for this year.

ASSUMPTION #2... We know that there were at least another 12,000 motorcycles not tagged. If we made calculations based on **24,000** bikers.

- Total economic impact for the one day (Friday, June 13th, 2008) for 24,000 motorcycles, based on an average of \$206 would be **\$4,944,000**

- **If the 54% = DAYTRIPPERS** returned 5-times per year (as reported)**
- ******(assuming that the daytripper rates are inflated because of PD13 being an event, we will use the 2004 Average Expenditure as reported by Research Resolutions and Consulting at the rate of \$20 per person.)
- =12,960 people who would contribute an additional \$1,296,000 to our economy every year

- **If the remaining 46%of overnight visitors STAYED ONE NIGHT and returned 5 times per year at an average rate of \$199.04 per visit (as reported)**
- =11,040 people who would contribute an additional \$10,987,008 to our economy every year

SUMMARY: ESTIMATED BIKERS

These 24,000 bikers brought \$4,944,000 to this year's Friday the 13th event.

If they returned the reported number of daytrips and overnight stays to Norfolk County, they would contribute \$12,283,008 to the economy in 2008.

Therefore, including June 13, 2008 and return visits within 2008 by motorcycle operators, the total economic impact from the 24,000 bikers would be \$17,227,008 of motorcycle tourism this year.

<p><u>NOTE:</u> These assumptions or statistics do not include all of the extra tourists which were estimated at 120,000. The extra revenue from these visitors will be significant.</p>

CONCLUSION...

It is estimated that the economic impact of bikers attending PD13 on June 13, 2008, ranges from \$2.4 million to \$4.9 million.

Additional return visits to Norfolk County have an estimated economic impact ranging from \$6.1 million to \$12.2 million.

The economic impact of Motorcycle tourism in Norfolk County on an annual basis – when one PD13 event is held in a warm-weather month, and motorcycle enthusiasts return again the same year at a rate suggested in the survey results – ranges from \$8.6 million to \$17.2 million.

Without a doubt, the motorcycle tourism segment should continue to be an important marketing target of Norfolk County as they significantly impact annual economic revenues for the business community. Ideas would be to...

- Create a motorcycle webpage on www.norfolktourism.ca with photography, routes, accommodations, places of interest and blog capabilities
- Expand on the current motorcycle route map showing more scenic rides throughout Norfolk County. As well, identifying gas stations, mechanic shops, favourite dining locations and accommodations.
- Introduce direct communication via email to this segment about events, the Experience Guide etc. (we have established a significant data base of motorcycle riders through the contest.)
- Continue to raise our profile at the Motorcycle Supershow in January in Toronto. Attendance has been approximately ½-million at past shows and Norfolk County is a favourite stop.

Based on comments received, there are some distinctive reasons why bikers come to Norfolk County. Some of these should be promoted further.

- “Beaches and swimming was the overwhelming number one response”. In light of this comment, we should be exploring the “Blue Flag” designation for our beaches. The Blue Flag is a voluntary eco-label awarded to beaches and marinas around the world. The program is owned and run by the independent non-profit organisation Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). The Blue Flag works towards sustainable development at beaches/marinas through strict criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, and safety and other services. The Blue Flag program includes environmental education and information for the public,

decision makers and tourism operators. Ontario beaches already in this program include Wasaga Beach, Sauble Beach and many in the Toronto area.

- “Dining at the many restaurants” was a popular comment. Norfolk County should continue to work with its many restaurants and agriculture partners, as well as Savour Ontario to promote Norfolk County as a Culinary Tourism region.
- “Boating, camping and fishing” ranked high on their list. Norfolk County is currently working to support the production of promotional videos for boating, fishing and the outdoors. This is an area where marketing efforts should grow.

The information contained in this report will be forwarded to the Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Board for examination. Some actions may be included in discussions related to the implementation of the Premier Ranked Tourist Destination Framework.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS...

We would like to acknowledge and thank sponsors, partners, staff and others to helped in the coordination of this Guinness World Record attempt.

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