

## **SPRING ROAD TRIP - ALLENTOWN AND POINTS IN-BETWEEN**

**BOY, DID WE LUCK OUT!** Six days of cool running without a drop of rain. In **APRIL**, no less. Up front: big kudos and a whole basket of thanks to Steve and Sue Meyer (once again) for organizing and leading a safe and fascinating 6-day trip to points north. **THANK YOU STEVE & SUE!!!**

Here are the venues and events we took in, including some reports by others who chose alternative options over the course of the trip.

**To start with my favorite: The Antique Ice Tool Museum** (aka “Ice Museum” - no, not that ICE) in West Chester, PA. At the last minute, Steve managed to get hold of Kathy Barth, the daughter of its founder, Peter Stack, who roused out her Dad for a special visit to one of the more intriguing stops along our way. Did you know that from the 1810s until mid-twentieth Century, the cutting, shipping and preservation of frozen water from rivers, lakes and ponds was a big chunk of the American economy, employing in its heyday hundreds of thousands of people in harvesting, shipping and storing ICE?? I guess I suspected as much, but to see the whole history of this process laid out in an exquisite private museum was a bit of a revelation. Check out the photos!! (And thanks to Kathy and Pete for the detailed explanation of everything we saw). That was the very beginning of our trip.

**At the tail end was my second favorite: The Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles.** We visited there on our last jaunt to the Yuengling Brewery in 2017, but I’d forgotten what a wonderful little museum this is. A display of half a dozen early Duryeas may be one of the more representative of this marque in the world, and their collection of pre-WW1 brass era cars is significant, not only for the variety of long-forgotten makes (1914 Dile Roadster, 1918 Biddle, 1914 Tuiraine, *et al*) but the fact that almost all were produced in Pennsylvania. The attached carriage and sleigh museum is even more exquisite than I remembered, and the new addition, scheduled to open this summer is going to dramatically expand this venue. Gotta go back!!

In between these two were visits to **Yuengling** in Pottstown – the oldest continuously operating brewery in the U.S. (1829) with free samples for everyone, which we walked off with a visit to **Jerry’s Classic Cars &**

**Collectibles** (aka Jerry's Auto and Nostalgic Paraphernalia Museum) before getting back in our cars. Jerry's is a hoot.... one of those jumbles (20,000+ items) dedicated to the old saw that 'one man's junk is another man's treasured addition to his private collection'. You gotta just stand in one place for as long as it takes to absorb the thousands of bits of mid-century Americana in front of you .... in back of you, above and below you. And the cars: For those of a certain age, all your adolescent feelings of automotive envy come rushing back. Jerry gave us running commentary and a "*Welcome Back*", even hailing a vintage trolley repro to ferry us all back to Yuengling.

Other stops Steve put on the menu were:

1. **Barry's Car Barn**, a lunch stop in Amish Country at Intercourse, PA (no sniggering) .... notable for: a) a great little sequence of Chevrolet Corvette models to 1966, b) a fun display of classic Chevy Bel Airs thru the 1950s, c) a line-up of nine Carroll Shelby GT350 & 500 Mustangs (+ an original AC Cobra) and d) a potpourri of other classics including the love-of-my life: a nicely restored 1930 Model 'A' Woody which redeemed all those ugly Chevys.
2. **The DuPont Hagley estate** and mansion with its gunpowder works, small car museum (DuPonts, natch), and a fully operational machine shop (the Millwright), entirely run off leather belts from the waterwheel in the sluice outside. We were treated to a private tour and demos by Johnathon, the head volunteer machinist and historian. That was cool as dirt, as was the DuPont family manse on the hill.
3. **Longwood Gardens**, where Dave, Laurie and I peeled off to see all the flora in bloom for Easter Week and visit the new glass pavilion. The latter is some 32,000 square feet of indoor Mediterranean flora which will blow your mind if you're not expecting this in the middle of Chester County, PA. (The whole indoor pavilion complex is some 175,000 sq ft). It was mid-week after spring break and we had parts of Longwood almost to ourselves with time to stop and chat with the head Bonsai Curator, Kevin Bielicki, at length on the development and care of these exquisite creations. We visited the manse and wandered the outdoor gardens until our feet ached, and headed back to the group with a smile.

4. The rest of our club opted to visit **Bob Martino's Private Collection** of fine-point *AACA Zenith Award*, *MARC of Excellence* and *Henry Award* Model 'A's in Skippack, PA. (See photos). According to Steve this was a treat and a half of gorgeously restored Model 'A's (from an AA Dump Truck, AA Jack Daniels Delivery Truck to Tudors, a Cabriolet 68B, Pickup and Panel Trucks), all representing the best-of-the-best of the restorers art. Bob was a gracious host and an inspiration to us do-it-yourselfers. Thanks, Bob.
  
5. **Old Spokes Auto Museum** – a private museum which Steve discovered north of Kutztown, PA in a wonderful converted complex of 1930s Ford & Maxwell dealerships. It houses one man's obsession (60+ cars) with Hudson and Essex automobiles from 1909 to 1954. Wow! This has to be the largest collection of Hudson-Essex-Terraplane cars on the planet. The resident manager/restorer treated us to a couple of delightful hours of guided wandering around a gem of a collection, lovingly assembled. A treat.

You might conclude from the above that we all rolled from one adventure to another without a hitch and met up at some delicious watering hole to exchange impressions at day's end. Well ... sort of. Out of the 18 of us (and 11 Model 'A's) who showed up in West Chester, we enjoyed the full company of 14 for the whole trip, with time out for numerous teaching moments (aka: mechanical mishaps). Joe & Beth Candella and their beautiful Tudor, and new members Bruce and Joy Spahr and their nice '29 Woody Wagon were constrained by prior commitments which shortened their time with us. Among the rest, Dave & Laurie, John Miller and John Leydon spent time in Norm Molter and Milt Hartig's "parking lot infirmary" learning about carb float levels, the importance of clean electrical connections, and such. ABSOLUTELY AMAZING what a little corrosion can do to mess up your day!! Thanks guys. All made it home safe and sound, much the wiser with buggies more or less intact ☺.

Couldn't possibly end this without mentioning Laurie's success, night after night, in getting all of us to slurp, lick, spoon, scarf down gobs of ice cream desserts from whichever homemade creameries she found within hailing distance (and the local Giant, if not). Not a few of us rolled home with several pounds added to the scales!

**So, who's "All"?** Here's the gang: Steve & Sue Meyer, Joe & Beth Candella, Jon Miller, Dave & Laurie McLeish, John Leydon, Bruce & Joy Spahr, Milt Hartig, Miguel & Jody Escobar, Don Keller, Norm & Marlene Molter, Harvey & Laura Hack

Come with us next time!

John Leydon