

AACA's 75th Anniversary Meet Was A Grand Celebration

By Ted Schneider

AACA's 75th Anniversary Meet was more than three years in the planning and the result was a multiple-day National Meet that was memorable by any measure. As advertised, this birthday party had something for everybody to do during the four days in Louisville, KY – June 30th to July 3rd. You could celebrate by taking any, or all, of five self-guided driving tours, attending daily events like the riverboat dinner cruise, hitting the city's historic and visitor attractions, attending the Anniversary Banquet and Great Race presentation, and/or showing your vehicle in the indoor car show. Participants were encouraged to drive their antique vehicles to the Meet and also to the events that didn't have bus transportation. The streets of Louisville had antique cars scattered from morning to dusk each day.

Now a brief word about the weather. Wednesday through Friday had unusual weather for early July in the Ohio River valley. It was sunny, with highs in the low 80s and low humidity – a pleasant three days. On Saturday, it got a little bit warmer, but we were indoors at the air-conditioned Kentucky Exposition Center.

Louisville is sort of a semi-big city with a population of about a quarter million. Traveling around town to various attractions and events, all of us found a combination of small-town welcoming and southern hospitality. I guess they get lots of practice putting on the Kentucky Derby.

Wednesday, the first day, after picking up the registration packets, most of the early arrivals took the historic Louisville driving tour, which was a late afternoon event that spread over three hours to minimize snarling local traffic during rush hour. This was the opening event and there were about 200 cars that ended up at the ice cream social.

The self-guided driving tours provided the following options: Lexington area horse country – 160 mile round trip; Bardstown "My Old Kentucky Home" site – 100 miles; French Lick, IN resort and casino – 120 miles; Elizabethtown's Swope Auto and Patton museums – 100 miles; and Churchill Downs museum and racetrack – within three miles of the host hotel. There was a full card of night-time thoroughbred racing at Churchill Downs and some Meet attendees took the opportunity to see the track in operation, do a little bit of betting, and have an authentic mint julep.

Many more people arrived Thursday with driven and trailered vehicles. The parking lots around the host hotel filled with an amazing mix of cars from all eras. The feature of the day was the Ohio River dinner cruise on the Belle of Louisville. This event was so oversubscribed that two cruises were held – one in the late afternoon and the other in the evening just before sundown. Reportedly, about 1,000 of the 1,800 members and guests took the cruises. Because of parking limitations all of us were bussed downtown to the Belle's riverfront berth.

On the late cruise, there were very few empty seats either inside in the glass-enclosed dining deck or outside on the side and top decks. We got to see the Louisville riverfront and downtown with the four bridges in day light and lit-up at night. It definitely was a memorable cruise.

The local museums, including the Kentucky Derby and Louisville Slugger, had a lot of visitors. At the Louisville Slugger Museum while on the guided tour of the bat manufacturing factory that the museum is attached to we met a couple who noted the AACA hat and asked if the car show Saturday was free to spectators. Turns out that they were in town for a big judged pig show at the fairgrounds of the Expo Center. We told them that

our cars were like show-pigs, but with wheels, and assured them that the car show was free.

Wednesday through Friday the parking lots around the host hotel were a beehive of activity with members looking at others' cars, talking cars, repairing cars, getting ready to drive a tour or go to a local destination, and cleaning

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Pictured from the top: The Saturday car show in the Kentucky Expo Center's main pavilion; Boarding the Belle of Louisville for the late dinner cruise; and in the smaller pavilion that housed the Time Line cars – 1903 to 1985 – this 1911 Ford Model T belongs to Kevin Shields, new CR member Ned Shields' brother.

AACA's 75th Anniversary - continued



Shown from the top: Lou Fritz' 1948 Willys Jeepster in the DPC Class; The O'Dell's 1972 Pontiac Trans Am in Class 36F; Laura, Clinton & Eric O'Dell; and Joanne Day, Read Van Zile & Ted Schneider with OLE GAL & ZHORSE.

and preparing cars for the Saturday show. After lunch Friday, we located a nearby self-carwash where we used the kit in the trunk to remove 500 miles of MD-WV-KY bugs and road grime.

The car show on Saturday had 690 vehicles on display, with lots of elbow room in the building. The aisles of the car show had a lot of spectator traffic all day, similar to what it's like at Hershey. About 3:15 PM we all headed to the Awards Ceremony in a room that fit in about 1,200 people. To celebrate the 75th Anniversary they served delicious cake to everyone and gave out all the awards in about two hours.

Chesapeake Region members and guests attending the AACA's 75th Anniversary were: Susan & Terry Bond, Elaine & Courtney Shenkle, Mary Jane & Lou Fritz, Franklin Gage, Read Van Zile & Joanne Day, Brandon Karas & Ted Schneider, Clinton, Laura, & Eric O'Dell, and Evaline & Clayton Miller.

Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend

By Ole Gal – assisted by Read Van Zile

It's me again, **OLE GAL** Joanne Day's 1963 Thunderbird, to tell you about my trip to the AACA Diamond Jubilee in Louisville, KY. This was my first trip to an AACA National Meet and to Louisville. Boy was it neat! Joanne and Read thought so, too. We left Tuesday after loading Joanne and Read's luggage, two dogs, a cooler, and a cage on the back seat and floor; plus a large dog in the front seat shared by Joanne and Read. They do take advantage of my limited storage space.

For the early arrivals, Wednesday night there was a self-guided tour through some beautiful neighborhoods in old town Louisville. It ended across the Ohio River in Indiana with an Ice Cream Social in a river front park. I enjoyed the leisurely drive along the streets of the historic area.

Thursday morning we found **ZHORSE**, the 1983 Oldsmobile that belongs to Ted Schneider, in the host hotel parking lot. We took some pictures and then I drove Joanne and Read around the city and boy, were we impressed. Louisville is a beautiful city and is remarkably clean. Thursday night was the dinner cruise with bus transportation, so I had the night off.

The next morning, Friday, I took Joanne and Read to Churchill Downs, where I drove onto the track infield (it was allowed); and then I rested while they toured the track's museum. Friday afternoon many of the cars were being prepped for the show on Saturday. Joanne and Read spent a lot of time looking at the old cars, frequently oohing and aahing over various cars, which they would tell me about. I wanted some prepping too!

The Banquet was Friday night at the Expo Center with more than 1,100 people there. Afterwards, everyone moved to an auditorium set-up in the next hall. The evening's entertainment was a delightful presentation about the Great Race of 1908 from New York to Paris. The narrator was Jeff Maul who is the great-grandson of the driver of the winning car. Joanne told me that he was super.

Joanne and Read were newbies to these national events and since they are not interested in having me compete for trophies, they didn't put me in the Expo Center show. I love to show-off, so maybe next time they'll reconsider.

The Kyana Region and AACA did a super job. Everything we saw went smoothly and efficiently. Joanne and Read told me they had such a good time that they're going to the next national event, which will be in Hershey in October. Oh boy, another trip; I wish it were further away.