

TUCKWOODS' TRI-STATE TOUR

(aka *The Mississippi Drive*)

September 14-16, 2018

By Ginger Carney

*Oh, What a beautiful mornin'. Oh, what a beautiful day!
And oh, what a fantastic event!*

Jim and Joanne Tuckwood treated 40+ BMC members to a delightful weekend event beginning in Platteville, driving through beautiful and curvy roads of southwestern Wisconsin, a bit of Iowa, and a bit of Illinois. Jim and Marcy Hotz, the consummate *Sweeps* kept the group together despite a couple of missed signals. Hank Netzinger and Terry Rieck helped in the planning of a really great Miata event, too.

We arrived on Friday evening, most of us staying at a very nice, new Holiday Inn Express while others stayed elsewhere. Since "Steve's Pizza" is just across the street from the HIE, we gathered there for some food and lots of conversation and laughter. Of course we had a "guys table" and a "gals table" so that each group could focus on its favorite topics, including the inevitable stories of various updated body parts and wellness/illness issues. As I said, we laughed a lot! We ended the night early and looked forward to the good free breakfast at HIE followed by the 8:30am drivers' meeting.



Once out of Platteville, we traveled at a leisurely pace which enabled the drivers to see the surrounding scenery while still keeping eyes on the roads. Spectacular vistas of rolling hills, valleys of lush vegetation, cows (mostly Angus) grazing contently, and fields of cornstalks and soybeans. Along with the blue skies and occasional clouds, it was a panorama of color.

Unfortunately, our visit to Bellevue State Park wasn't as restful as it could have been due to the ravenous mosquitoes!! Still, we enjoyed the view of the Mississippi River town of Bellevue, Iowa.



We had lunch at the "world-famous" Poopy's near Savannah, Illinois. It had become hot and more humid as the day moved on, so the large and numerous fans in the outdoor restaurant were welcomed (kept the flies and mosquitoes away, too!). Of course, the Harleys and other motorcycles were there, but so was a British MG car club. At one point I was standing next to a woman wearing a "I Own an MG" tee-shirt. I smiled at her and said, "Well, *WE* have a Miata." She smiled back. (No, a brawl did not

commence.)

Among our afternoon adventures was a relaxing stop at Galena Cellars (IL). We relaxed with a beverage and enjoyed lazy conversation, a pleasant breeze, and welcomed shade. Some of us purchased wine or cider to take home, too. After driving a few hours more along really fun roads, we arrived at Arthur's for dinner, cocktails, and more conversation. Many of us were tired from the heat and humidity we experienced toward the end of the afternoon, so after dining, we headed back to our hotels in Platteville. Others stayed at Arthur's for the stand-up comedy show presented on a regular basis. Brian and I did not stay, but we heard that the comedian was excellent.

We did not have a party room at the HIE, but it probably would not have been used that night because everyone retired to their rooms, some of us ready for Sunday's drive and dreaming happy memories of Saturday's excursion.

Jim and Joanne offered a short Sunday drive towards New Glarus. Again, it was a beautiful morning with an exhilarating breeze, and a soft haze in the distance. Not all Saturday participants joined in, but those of us who did were treated to *Rollercoaster Road* and other great back roads, the surprising statue of a large Rhino on someone's lawn, and the sight of our ribbon of colorful little cars. We ended at the Culver's in New Glarus, where we dispersed - some to home, some to tour the brewery, others heading to different destinations.

It was a great weekend. However, we did have a few "hiccups" - not due to the leaders or to the route sheet - but because of the need for CB radios as well as the need for all of us to "keep the car behind you in view"! In fact, if it weren't for our Sweeps having a CB, we could have lost quite a few cars. Jim and Marcy did an excellent job as always.

Otherwise, we couldn't have asked for a better tour of the Tri-State corners of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois. It was fun!

Thanks to Tuckwoods for an exceptional Miata event!