

TWISTED TRIANGLE JUNE 23RD-JULY1ST

Friday June 23rd

The ritual drivers meeting took place over breakfast at the Quality Inn in Merrillville, Indiana. The small but energetic group included leaders Tom and Mary Lynn Cinealis, Ron and Lin Carlson, Jim and Peg Wurzbach, Tom and Bonnie Weismueller, and Jim and Marcy Hotz.

The group left around 8:30 on a grey and rainy morning, with our tops up. We were heading for sunnier skies on I-65. We drove through Meadow Lake Wind Farm in NW Indiana that spans 4 counties.

Our lunch stop was Squealer's BBQ in Mooresville. The food was great, lots of choices. More driving with Tom trying to find as many twists and turns as he could with us arriving at our motel in Madison, Indiana at 5:30. There was quite a bit of confusion about the rooms, but finally it was sorted out and no one needed to double up. Dinner in town was at the Red Pepperoni. It was still raining when we returned to the motel, but we were encouraged with the forecast for a sunny day tomorrow.

Saturday June 24th

Today we had free time until 4pm. Some visited Clifty Falls State Park for walking trails and for taking photos. Some drove or walked the lovely Riverfront, or shopped the Farmers market, and many specialty shops. There was even enough time for an afternoon nap. At 4pm we regrouped to head out for dinner. Tom C led us on some wonderful twisty roads, one which turned to gravel and ended abruptly at a swollen creek so we ended up taking another road. Dinner was at the Great Crescent Brewery in Aurora. The beers were incredible, Blood Orange Ale, Coconut Porter, and Monkey Space APA. There was even shopping available for the ladies. Many of the food offerings were smoked and delicious, served on freshly baked buns or pretzel bread. We ate and chatted until it was time for the drive back. On the way back we passed the Big Oak National Wildlife Refuge, a 50,000-acre preserve. The land was once a WWII ordinance proving ground, hence the chain link fencing topped with barbed wire. Depart for Lexington tomorrow. Author: Marcy Hotz

Sunday June 25th

Sunday am we left for Lexington Kentucky. Now we were really finding some nice twisties. One of our stops was The Big Bone Lick State Historic Park. This site is the birthplace of American Vertebrate Paleontology. The ice age animals such as the Mastodon and Ground Sloth were attracted to this area to lick the mineral rich soil. Today these animals are extinct, but their bones remain. This area was also the place where people came to make salt. In the 1800's it was the location for a hotel and health spas.

It was now time to move on, next stop was the Boone County Distiller, a fairly new distillery in of all places an industrial park. The owner Kim gave us the tour and following tasting. The first offering was a type of Moonshine and was not a favorite of many, but the Bourbon's they served up tasted very good and many bottles were purchased. The next 3 nights we stayed in Lexington so we could explore the area.

Monday June 26th

Monday in Lexington was a free day. The city is fairly large with a lot of options for exploration. If you are not aware the childhood home of Mary Todd Lincoln is in Lexington, as well as the Smucker's factory and Big Ass Fans. Some of us did some shopping and snooping around, and others visited the Kentucky Horse Park. The Cinealis' and Carlson's had a drink in one of the local watering holes, The Village Idiot Pub, very cute place and very popular for a photo op. After our busy day we got together for dinner at a local Steak and Seafood place Malone's to celebrate Marcy's birthday. The food was excellent and the company and conversation were equally so. Author: Mary Lynn Cinealis

Tuesday June 27th

The weather was beautiful and we took advantage of that by driving to the college Town of Berea. We did manage to take some curvy back roads which allowed us to admire the southern style brick homes that look like they were owned by some very fancy people. Kentucky is known for their horses and we saw our fair share of Horse Farms as well. Once we got to Berea we scattered to do some shopping and then went as a group to a larger facility a few miles away that offers a wide selection of Art and Craft items made in Kentucky, The Kentucky Artisan Center. Some of us did manage to pick up an item or two. Everyone had a lovely dinner later that night.

Wednesday June 28th

Another beautiful and busy day. Today we leave Lexington and head for our next stop Louisville. We leave early since our ride will be about 5 hours. We have a tour at a Cooperage, it is a factory that makes the barrels that the bourbon industry uses to hold all that glorious bourbon. The tour is at 1pm so we have time for lunch at a cute little café. That's when we see on the menu something we are not familiar with. The Kentucky Hot Brown. It is an open-faced sandwich with turkey and bacon, covered in mornay sauce, topped with a tomato and then baked (more on this later). Afterwards we head over for the tour. Our guide took us into the plant to start the tour and an employee collapsed in front of us, (probably from the heat). We went through the entire process of making the barrels, it is very labor intensive and I know many of us felt sorry for these workers because it was so hot in the building. Almost the last thing they do to the barrel is put the char on it which is burning the inside of the barrel according to how the distillery has ordered it. The more "char" the barrel has the more flavor the bourbon will have. After we left the cooperage we traveled a short distance to Maker's Mark Distillery and toured there. The grounds of this distillery are beautiful. In addition to seeing their process we were also surprised to find some pieces of "Chihuly" the famous glass blower. These huge glass installations

were scattered throughout the property and were gorgeous. That was a special treat. Dinner was at the Bourbon Kitchen in the Marriott Hotel down the road. The food was delicious and so were the specialty Bourbon drinks. Author: Lin Carlson

Thursday June 29th

Our week was slipping away but we still have a few days to continue to enjoy our trip. Today we have free time to explore all that Louisville has to offer since we don't have to meet up with everyone until later in the afternoon at Church Hill Downs. A few of us ventured downtown to tour the Louisville Slugger Museum. We toured the facility where the majority of Major League Baseball bats are made and it was pretty cool. The making of the bats was more interesting than I thought it would be, plus we all got a mini bat at the end of the tour. Afterwards much to our surprise we had worked up quite a thirst and needed to find a nearby distillery. Only steps away we found the Evan Williams Bourbon Experience.

We also needed to get our Bourbon Trail Passport stamped. This distillery produces one barrel per day and is the first one to locate itself in the downtown area. I guess a few more are scheduled to open very soon. The facility was stunning, especially the tasting rooms that were themed for different historical eras. The bourbon wasn't bad either. It was now time to meet the rest of the group at the iconic Church Hill Downs. We first wanted to take a tour and learn more about the history of the horses as well as the park itself. The last two nights of June happen to be the last two nights of horse racing for the season, so we were very lucky to not only tour it but also experience actual racing. Placing bets and understanding how to place those bets takes a little while to learn, but it sure is fun to put \$2 on a horse to win. It is very exciting to cheer for your favorite horse and then see it cross the finish line. I picked 3 winners, but my pay out was pretty small. Most of us stayed for all the races and had a most enjoyable time drinking our Mint Juleps!!!

Friday June 30th

Our last day in Kentucky and we decided to visit "The Most Beautiful Small Town in America" Bardstown Kentucky. A very quaint little town full of personality. We arrived in town and had free time to explore all the town had to offer. The Hotz's and Weismueller's decided to see the town from aboard a Horse Carriage and the rest of us did some antiquing and poking around the many shops in town. We all met for lunch at an historic Tavern, "Old Talbott Tavern which has been hosting travelers since 1779, one of them was Abe Lincoln and he probably drank at their Bourbon bar which is the oldest in Kentucky. After lunch we all became thirsty again and took a short ride to Heaven Hill Bourbon Heritage Center, (pretty fancy name for a distillery, hey). Anyway we learned more little tidbits from our wonderful guide inside a very dark Ric House, that's what they call the building that houses all the barrels. Afterwards our tasting took place in a Bourbon Barrel shaped room. More Bourbon was drank and purchased. Dinner tonite is a splurge for everyone, we decided to go downtown and experience the Brown Hotel, where the Kentucky Hot Brown was invented. The menu item was invented as a late night supper to keep the patrons there after they attended dances. The dining room had old world elegance and style with the prices of the dinners to match. Many eyebrows went up when looking over the menu, but the experience was well worth it. Everyone really enjoyed it.

Saturday July 1st

We are heading home today. The Hotz's join us for breakfast at the Cracker Barrel, but soon after leave us to visit family. Jim and Peggy have already said their goodbyes so the Cinealis', Carlson's and Weismueller's head back to Wisconsin. Author: Mary Lynn Cinealis