

July 28, 2012 NBCC Monthly Drive....."The Grape Stomp"

Well, I was glad to see that we have some fearless, hot weather drivers, who will do anything for a bit of free wine! For those who held back, you missed a really fun day and even many who came with air-conditioned rides forsook that luxury and joined the top-down crazies!

Our drive started in Percy Warner Park just off Hwy 100 because I wanted to make sure I spread the word about how beautiful the roads are in there. Attendees included myself (Carol was out of town), Wanda Thompson, PeeWee & Vernon Adcock, Bob & Betty Bumbalough, Arvin & Debbie Appelman, Phil & Ramona Trusty, Andy Adams, Paul Sanguinetti, and (at least for the first part of the drive) Bill and Sally Davis. I think Bill just brought out his MGTA because it looks so good around my Riley Lynx tourer!



The Percy Warner roads are fantastic! Gotta go slow for Bikers & Hikers abound...we only did 4 miles of about 30 that are in there! Our first stop was at Garrison Creek rest area on the new Natchez Trace. We'd been on the road close to an hour and the section of the "Old Natchez Trace" jiggled nearly everything loose on us and the cars! Bill and Sally left us at this point.....but at the other end of the Trace we replaced them with Frank & Peggy Broome!



With nearly 2 hours on the clock, all was well and even the Riley was having a good time as we rolled into Centerville for lunch. Only one hiccup on the Trace as there's a construction zone where I 840 has crossed it.....that road will revolutionize travel in the area.



We ate at Breece's Café on the square in Centerville. This is a classic southern Meat & Some Stuff sorta place where you can kill yourself eating for under \$10 including fabulous pie....and ice cream! I won't say it's the best spot in the world, but I'd recommend it if you are in the area looking for real down home food. Tell Linda the NBCC sent ya.



After lunch we had to stretch a bit in the shade by the courthouse. It looks like Wanda is explaining something to the group....looks like it might have been about Paul as she scurried home well before the last winery!

From here it was a short drive to the Grinder's Switch Winery. I made everyone turn around once as I found my way....but we all made it. Grinder's Switch was claimed as home by entertainer Minnie Pearl....though it was really just a train switching yard....not much of a burg.

At the winery, we had a round of tastings and a fair amount of spirits was bought. There was lots of shade here and the owners asked us to set-up for a picture of the cars. The effort must have burned me out as I didn't take any more pictures at the stops to come!



Gail was a very personable server and this was a fun stop...we felt like we were waiting on the porch for the Revenuers!



After leaving Grinders Switch, we headed southeast to Keg Springs Winery near Hampshire TN. That was about a 45 minute drive.... mostly on Swan Creek Rd / Salem Rd which are delightfully twisted.

Salem Rd actually dropped us on Hwy 412 right at the "current" end of the Natchez Trace! Actually, it is just the area of an ongoing bridge replacement, but if you are doing the trace you need to prepare for a dusty exit/entrance dance in this construction zone.

Just down the road we turned toward Keg Springs.

At Keg Springs, we did the tasting/buying thing again and even sat on their lovely deck for a bit w/cheese & crackers washed down with wines and such. All of these wineries promote picnicking but no outside alcohol is permitted. While we were there, we listened to a Blues guitar singer/player named Blue Blake....pretty good entertainment!

At this point, several of our group elected to bail out due to Saturday evening plans. Some of them had been to the next stop, Amber Falls Winery, but we hated to see them go. This last stop is just down Cathey's Creek Rd from Keg Springs and it is the largest/most sophisticated of the 3 wineries. The Appelmans & the Broomes were familiar with this spot as they visit from their near-by Columbia homes. We sampled a larger selection of wines here and sat for quite a while in the largest (of several) shelter listening to Randy Janowski's jazz band....they were very good!

We puttered around here a bit trading rides and drives in Rileys, Jensen Healeys and such before heading home about 5:30 (I think!). Everyone seemed to have had a great time and, as far as I know, they got home OK. I have to admit that the Riley and I paused in Leiper's Fork at Pucketts for a beer in the shade.....I was just needing to be brought down a bit from being with that sophisticated NBCC bunch of wine aficionados!

Sorry more of you didn't venture out with us.....maybe next time. There's a 4th winery starting in the area August 12th called Natchez Hills.....maybe we need to do this thing again w/revisions!?!?

I've included my route notes below if anyone's interested in a rerun. Let me know if you have any questions or need some company!

Mike Long

This will be a pretty long drive with about 155miles of driving and 4 ½ hours on the road (if you come back on the Trace to the Lovelace Café area)! If we spend about an hour at lunch and at each of 3 wineries.....we're in for an 8-9 hour trek! If you need gas.....get it! Or let me know and we can do a gas stop in Leiper's Fork before getting on the Natchez Trace. All of the wineries will have crackers, cheese, etc.....but no real food. You cannot imbibe any spirits on-site except theirs

1. Our Drive will start at 10:00 at the Percy Warner "Stone Pillared" entrance off Hwy 100, north of the Harpeth Trace intersection. If you've never been in this park.....you'll love it. Even at 20 mph (watch out for bikers and hikers) it is a treat and we'll only do a 4 mile sample that ends at Vaughn Rd and Old Hickory Blvd.
2. We'll stay on Vaughn Rd for about 2 mi, then **TURN R** on Sneed Rd for .5mi, **TURN L** on Old Natchez Trace for 4 mi to Old Hillsboro Rd/Hwy 46. This old road is very near the original walking Trace path and (except for the surface) is a delightful bit of old Nashville. We'll pass a marker for Old Town that is the site of an Indian City.
3. **TURN R** on Hwy 46 and we'll travel about 8 mi through Leiper's Fork and **TURN R** at Pinewood Rd for about .7 mi to the Natchez Trace Parkway on the **LEFT**. We'll be on the Trace for about 21 miles with a potty break at Garrison's Creek (unless we stopped already for Gas!) before exiting **LEFT then RIGHT** onto Hwy 50 W.
4. Hwy 50W takes us to Centerville after 14 mi and we'll **TURN R** on Rts 48/100 (Linden Rd) for .5 mi into town. A **RIGHT** on Church St at the square will take us to Breece's Café for Lunch. When we leave....circle the square (is that even possible?) and head back out 48/100 and **TURN R** on Hwy 50W heading to the Grinder's Switch Winery. We'll **TURN R** after 4 mi onto Old 50 Loop and the winery turns up in a mile on the left. Let's taste a bit, walk about, and see what's up!
5. When we leave the winery....retrace our route back to Rts 48/100 (Linden Rd), but stay on Hwy 50 for about 1.5 mi east to a **TURN R** on Swan Creek Rd.... for about 11 miles when it becomes Salem Rd.... until we **TURN L** on Hwy 412/Columbia Hwy. We stay on this for about 4.5 mi before a **TURN L**, out of the construction zone, onto Ridgetop Rd.
6. After about 2 mi **TURN L** on Cathey's Creek Rd for 4.8 mi when you'll see signs for the Keg Springs Winery with a **TURN L** on Keg Springs Rd....the winery is up the hill to the left in about a mile. Do the wine thing again....and enjoy some music!
7. We'll leave like we came.....but when Cathey's Creek Rd meets Ridgetop again, **TURN L** for about .3 mi to Amber Falls Winery on the right. They too will have music tonight and you can stay as long as you'd like.
8. There is a 4th winery I'd hoped to visit....right off Hwy 412 in Hampshire....but the opening of the Natchez Hills Winery tasting room is delayed into August. They do have vineyard tours and activities now..... but No taste/What a waste!
9. When you leave Amber Falls, **TURN L** back along Ridgetop to Hwy 412. To the right on 412 is Hohenwald and the Trace's (temporary) entrance is in the construction zone as a **TURN R** "detour" after the second new bridge.....for a 51 mile jaunt to the Lovelace Café area. Go left on Hwy 412 to get into Columbia if that's your route home.
10. If you are hungry.....the Fall Hollow Campground and Restaurant is in the construction zone before you get to the Trace entrance. I had a pretty good burger there, the folks are nice, and they'd like to see our cars! Not much else around for eating or gas (unless the station in Hampshire stays open later on weekends) until you get to a city! Watch for deer-in-the-dark whatever direction you head!

I hope we've all survived and had a good time.....I'm headed up the Trace before I need more light than the Riley can make!