
Miami Valley Chapter 2010 Road Tour — Part 1

by Mike Mills

The 2010 Road Tour was a loop from Dayton to Bowling Green to Somerset and back home to Dayton Traveling I-71 to I-65 to The Bluegrass Parkway (Future I-66) to I-75 , 650 miles in 3 days is a fun trip but in a Corvette, its fantastic (it's not the destination but the journey).

Many members had commitments such as vacation, family in town and the dreaded thing called work making it impos-

sible to swing the trip. Friday was a cool morning when 5 chapter members: (Dave Pritchard 07 coupe, Nick Kammer 03 convertible, Bob Hiney 95 coupe, Dale Felty 71 Convertible, Mike Mills 66 convertible), one previous member (Jerry Croy 07 coupe) and 1 potential member (Ross Backe 02 convertible) headed out at 7:15AM for a testosterone filled weekend. A game of switch-a-roo was

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played as most people drove each other's corvettes for a change. The first destina-

pilgrimage to Bowling Green Kentucky complete with a VIP tour of the Corvette Museum.

The first goal of the trip was to successfully negotiate Cincinnati rush hour traffic. This worked up quite an appetite, so we made a

pit stop at Bob Evans in Florence at 8AM. Over breakfast we discussed the agenda for our arrival in Bowling Green deciding to forego the Dinner and Kentucky back country "cruise". The group choose instead to have dinner at Smokey Bones in Bowling Green and get further details on the "Power Cruise" caravan



leaving in the morning. The back country cruise should have been more appropriately termed a "road-tour"

Indianapolis and fill up the 66 & 71 Corvette's. We all know with Classic Corvettes is all about "Smiles per gallon" and they truly can "pass anything but a gas station". It was a nice cruise but the pleasant morning quickly turned to unbearable heat making AC and a roof the favored method of travel. We played a little cat and mouse and at times exceeding the speed limit just a smidgen.

We arrived at a shell gas station to fill up the gas guzzlers and for Jerry Croy to get reacquainted and for everyone to meet his wife Elaine. Everyone flocked back to the creature comforts of their own cars, leaving Mike & Dale in non-AC convertibles, please pass the sunscreen!! The cruise down I65 was scenic and enjoyable, even if some of us we're feeling the noon sun and the 100 degree July heat.

We arrived at the museum and ready for lunch. The group quickly scattered looking at the "nursery", "gift shop", locating the clubs brick and restroom. The group got together and entered the "Corvette Café"

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for a 50's style lunch, I highly recommend the Potato Salad!

After lunch the group scattered continuing to check out the

many sites.

The museum staff was ready when we we're all together to begin the VIP tour.

How long do you

think it would take to assemble 8 people in the lobby? Try 45 minutes. After all there is so much to see with the expansion.

The VIP tour consisted of a walk through the museum with many behind the scenes "sneak peeks". The museum has a defensive driving simulator, it is almost operational. We learned the significance of the symbols making up the Corvette crest. We also got to peak at many display cars tucked away in storage including the one and only 1988 ZR1 prototype. Also a shark hanging from the ceiling, some trinket of Bill Mitchell maybe. The tour concluded in the sphere where you could review the

stories of those people responsible for making the Corvette an icon. Next time you're at the museum listen to the story around Gary Mortimer, one of our own chapter members is being



interviewed and explaining the birth of NCRS. The tour concluded in the

gift shop where members were picking out those necessities needed to complete their collections, including a phone call to Dayton for a missing trinket one member has been searching for over 6 months and yes the Museum had it.

While waiting for the party to be complete a few of us wondered into the "Archives". This was still under construction as the museum catalogs all the content to be available in the near future. Then we we're asked if we wanted to "go into the back room"? Is a Corvette an American ICON? Can this group just not get enough things

Corvette? We'll HE** YES we want to go!!! We we're like kids in a candy store!! The first 6 or so racks held every build sheet of every Corvette that ever rolled out of Bowling Green! I turned to Dave Pritchard and asked him if he knew his VIN? What a stupid question that was, as the VIN rolled off his tongue like his home phone number. In a matter of minutes the row,

shelf, box was found and the build sheet was right there!! If this isn't impressive what's next will blow you away!! Corvette history catalogued in 3 ring binders Just pick a topic. 53 Motorama, CERV 3, Mid-Engine design it's all there. Complete with pictures, GM internal office memos to Bill Mitchell, Harley Earl and of course Zora!!! We could spend weeks looking through everything.

Unfortunately Father Time had his way and the museum was now closed. Of course this group is Corvette Die-Hards and we we're the last to leave. The

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sun was setting and the parking lot was empty What a great photo opportunity!!!

The group then checked into our hotel and headed to dinner at Smokey Bones BBQ. We got the detail plans for the cruise

in the morning, several people won door prizes in a raffle and we even saw a 71 Blue Monte Carlo with Ohio plates and the owner of the car, our very own Larry Johnson!!

The group headed back to the hotel for some male bonding in the parking lot and a couple “cold ones” to close out the day. We also “tucked”

our classics into bed in such a way that any would be thief w/ a roll-

back would just keep moving.

A man from Michigan and his 14 year old son stopped by the group to comment on the all the nice Corvettes. Jerry Croy then

piped up “Do you want to go for a ride”? The deal was sealed that when Jerry’s

wife returned with his 07, Jerry would take the boy for a ride! This opportunity for the young boy turned into a pumpkin and as he’ll learn in life, timing is everything! The window was closed as Elaine returned, the dad was talking with the group and the son was nowhere to be found. By the time the son returned, Jerry & his wife

were in for the night and the ride in the 07 was no longer an option.

Luckily Dale Felty was

around and “bribed” the kid!! “You don’t want to ride

in new Corvette You’ll have many opportunities for that What you probably won’t get is another chance is to ride in a classic Corvette!!” “Want to go for a ride in my 71?”

The cars we’re “untucked” and the boy went off to experience what so many of us vividly remember to this day Our first ride in a Corvette!!

Dale did what so many of us need to do!! Infect America’s youth with the “Corvette Fever”! To get the youth to dream of American Muscle rather than the “Ricers” and European sport cars. The youth need to see these cars, ride in these cars. This is so the youth can walk the same path we did: which is dream about Corvettes, save for a Corvette and buy a Corvette to enjoy!

