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Hershey Kisses On The Road To The AACA Museum

By Tom Young, Jerry Gordon & Tom Kenney

When we arrived at the Hunt Valley Mall parking lot assembly spot for Chesapeake Region's Spring Tour before 9 AM on May 20th, we were greeted by a grand spread of *Dunkin' Donuts* coffee, donuts, and muffins set up by Anne and Tom Kenney on a portable serving table. This was a preview of the type of nice little touches that this club excursion offered to members. Plus the caffeine and sugar helped jump-start us on a Sunday morning, because we were going to need our wits to navigate the twists and turns of the tour route.

Tour directions and maps, individual ID badges, and dash plaques were handed out by Ted Schneider. Another nice touch was the little containers of Hershey Kisses for each car – after all, we were on our way to Hershey, the chocolate capital of the free world. Each car also received an automotive history quiz, which was to be handed in and graded at lunch. The winning entry was to receive the door prize. We were free to start on the morning tour to the AACA Museum at any time – 81 miles and about 2 hours and 15 minutes over back roads through north central Maryland and southern Pennsylvania – when we had our fill of coffee and donuts and visiting. Weather wise, the day turned out to be very pleasant and spring like, after starting with rain showers between 7 and 8 AM around Baltimore and west.

There were 40 members and guests signed up in 19 vehicles. A few decided to ride together, not so much to save gas but because it's more fun to have several sets of eyes on all the sights along the tour route. A tour

many of them Queen Anne style homes with those neat turret fronts. The next little town was Red Lion, where we got onto Rt. 624, which swings through Windsor and Wrightsville along the west bank of the Susquehanna River.



John Shenton III's Little Red Express 1979 Dodge Pickup. These trucks have become quite collectible.

route cheater among us was revealed when Joe Sordillo showed off his GPS device. Just kidding Joe. But, what is this world coming to when we go for a drive in an antique car equipped with a cell phone and GPS assistance? Welcome to the 21st century!

The tour route took us from Hunt Valley up to Hereford on Rt. 45, then through the picturesque little town of Monkton, to Rt. 23 to the Pennsylvania border, and on through Stewartstown. This old town had dozens of 19th century houses lining the main street,

There are several boat marinas and boat launching operations in this area and it is quite picturesque.

In Wrightsville we used the old concrete low bridge to cross the Susquehanna into Columbia. The old era bridge matched our cars. We then found our way to Rt. 743, which took us through Elizabethtown and directly into Hershey. Coming into Hershey along Cocoa Ave. you can see an aspect of the town that most of us

miss when we go to the Eastern Fall Meet. It's really a nice little place with pleasant streets and homes. Certainly not anything like Hershey Park Dr.

Along the way in Maryland and Pennsylvania, we spotted more than a dozen antique cars and trucks – some restored, some not – in driveways, parked in backyards, and in garages. There were even a few on the road, besides our cars, for a little Sunday morning drive. This must be old car country. The tour route was originally scoped out by Tom Kenney and then modified and detailed to enhance the drive. The rolling countryside, small rural towns, and the river views were appreciated by everyone.

Continued on the next page >>

Hershey Kisses - continued

At the Museum, we were allowed to park our antique cars in the designated spaces along the front drive – another nice touch – and we went inside to look at all the exhibits, including the Top Brass temporary exhibit. The Museum now has a schedule of temporary exhibits throughout the year and rotates and re-configures its permanent vehicle collection, so that every few months the whole facility offers a new viewing and learning experience in the history of the automobile.

One area that everyone absolutely has to visit is the Bus Museum in the basement, which is separately staffed and maintained. The information about busses is really interesting because most of us take these vehicles for granted and don't realize how this mode of mass transportation has evolved over the years. The AACA Museum has become one of the best antique car venues in the country, and should make AACA member's proud that it is a part our family of AACA related organizations.

Most of us had about two hours to look through the Museum before lunch at 1 PM upstairs in the Museum's rotunda. Lunch was served buffet style by an outside local caterer employed by the Museum. This was a very professionally organized lunch with

first-class food that was delicious, a nice presentation, and excellent service. For most of us used to the firehouse food served at antique car events, it was a real treat. The Museum facility is available for outside events and we would heartily recommend it. You won't be disappointed.

Lunch was preceded by a short talk about CARnival by Club member Al Storrs, who heads up that annual event, which is held at the Museum. The door prize was awarded to Dave Benson for the highest score on the history quiz. After lunch many of us continued to look through the Museum and some departed to go to the Crossroads Antique Mall in town.

And in another nice touch, Bud Currey, who volunteers at the Museum, gave some of us an insider's look behind the scenes. We were able to look at the car prep area, some of the cars currently held in reserve, and other back rooms.

At about 3:30 most of us started on our way back to Baltimore. Along the way on I-83 we came upon the hard luck car of this tour, Anne and Tom Kenney in their 1955 DeSoto, which had been having electrical problems all day. It finally stopped running and was parked on the side of the interstate near York. Several members stopped to offer assistance, but the car was DOA and

finally was towed via rollback to Hampstead. Later it was determined that a fairly new battery had a dead cell, which, of course, was replaced and the DeSoto is good to go again.

The next Club touring event is the Halloween Poker Run, which offers a different touring experience over back roads in Carroll and Baltimore counties. Along with lots of leaf looking in crisp fall weather, there is a great tour route contest, door prizes, and a nice dinner at Friendly Farm. The Poker Run, scheduled October 28th, always offers a fun-filled time with your antique car.

Members and guests who signed up for the Spring Tour to the AACA Museum were: Pat & Craig Andrews; Carrie & Dave Benson, 1957 Thunderbird; Carole & Bud Currey; Dorothy Frank, Ed Frank, Mable Frank, Virginia & John Frank, 1958 Chevrolet; Jerry Gordon; Lynn & John Horn, 1965 Thunderbird; Thelma & Dave Johnson; Anne & Tom Kenney, 1955 DeSoto; Victor Marino; Terry & Dan Materazzi; Laura & Eric O'Dell, 1972 TransAm; Dixie & John Raffensparger; Ted Schneider; Patrick & Brandon Lester + John Shenton, 1965 Plymouth; John Shenton III, 1979 Dodge; Rose & Paul Smith, 1964 Thunderbird; Florann & Joe Sordillo, 1950 Ford; Al Storrs; Henry VerValen; Tom Young; and Helen & Loy Zimmerman.



Two of the Top Brass featured exhibit cars on display in the Museum's impressive entrance. On the left: 1914 Ford Model T and on the right: 1895 Benton Harbor. Continued on the next page >>

Photos From The Spring Tour To The AACA Museum



Top row: The Frank's 1958 Chevrolet; seated from left - Virginia, John, Mable, Ed & Dorothy Frnk. Second row: Patrick Lester, John Shenton, Brandon Lester & John Shenton III; their 1965 Barracuda nestled next to the Little Red Express. Third row below: At the end of the day, the hard luck story was Anne & Tom Kennny's 1955 DeSoto being loaded on the rollback for the trip back to Hampstead; Dealer neon sign; Did Thelma Johnson and Anne Kenney find this ride in the Bantam at Hershey Park? Fourth row below: Laura & Eric O'Dell's 1972 Pontiac TransAm; The Hershey Kissmobile.

