



*Wayne and Marilyn Funk's
1924 Packard stands ready
to begin GIAT #20!*

Grand Indiana Auto Tour 20

By Darrel Wilkinson. Photos Steve Blakey.

The 20th Grand Indiana Auto Tour was held on July 30 to August 2nd in Batesville, Indiana. Batesville is located in the rolling hills of southeastern Indiana. We were excited to have 49 cars and 99 people on this year's tour. Of that number, 11 were first time participants. There were six states represented.

The Wednesday opening night banquet was held at The Sherman House Restaurant & Inn, a business on the National Register of Historic Places. The hotel was constructed in a German motif as there were many German settlers in the area during pioneer times.

Thursday morning began with a drive to the village of Sunman, Indiana. The first stop was McPherson's, a large printing business and a bridal shop years ago.



We then traveled a short distance to Jim and Pat Norman's to view a collection of antique and modified cars provided by them and several local car clubs.

We then took a scenic drive to Lawrenceburg where we stopped at the Lawrenceburg Speedway, a 3/8 mile high banked racetrack. The manager of the speedway gave us a comprehensive talk on the history of the track, the types of cars that raced there and named some famous Nascar drivers who still race there when they can.

We then traveled a short distance to the Dearborn County Country Club for a buffet lunch enjoyed by all.

After lunch we went to the Ohio River town of Aurora to tour a 19th century mansion, Veraestau, situated on a high bluff overlooking the Ohio River. This home is owned by the organization, Indiana Landmarks, who recognizes it as a historic site. After leaving Veraestau, everyone returned back through the scenic countryside to Batesville.

Friday started with a short drive to Weberding Woodcarving in Batesville. This is a 70 year old cabinet and woodcarving shop. A tour of the shop by one of the three brothers who operate the business was very informative. We were shown photos of a 40 foot tall alter built for a church in Indianapolis.

Heading north of Batesville, we stopped in the town of Oldenburg. Oldenburg is called the city of spires. This is because of the strong catholic presence there. We toured the Sisters of St. Francis convent and chapel. The buildings were very impressive. Our tour guides were very informative. We also toured the Michaela Farm where 200 acres were used to grow fruit and vegetables. They also maintain a herd of cattle for their use.

After leaving Oldenburg we made an interesting drive to the canal town of Metamora.

After lunch at the Hearthstone restaurant, whose tourist cabins were used for some scenes in the movie "Rainman" starring Dustin Hoffman, the group activities included a train ride on the Whitewater



1. Grand Indiana Auto Tour participants learn the details about quality printing at McPhearson's located in Sunman, Indiana **2.** A rare Chevrolet Apache pickup truck was one of the many beautiful cars on display at Jim and Pat Norman's **3.** The sprint cars at Lawrenceburg Speedway aren't quite VMCCA-ready, but they would be fun to drive! **4.** Model A traffic jam after our delicious lunch at the Dearborn Country Club **5.** Veraestau mansion sits majestically atop a bluff overlooking the Ohio river where three states are visible for the keep viewer to see.

Railroad, a canal boat ride, and a tour of a 19th century grist mill. An ice cream shop stop was made at Granny's Cookie Jar. Granny's holds a record for the most cookie jars of 2600 in the Guinness Book of Records. The shop also has 1000 salt and pepper shakers. The group spent the remainder of the day shopping in Metamora.

Saturday morning we traveled to the Milan Museum. This museum is dedicated to the 1954 high school basketball team that won the state championship against Muncie, a much larger school. The movie "Hoosiers" brought this to the nations attention. Two of the original team members made a very informative talk about the game.

Our final stop on the tour was Versailles, Indiana. We toured the art-deco style Tyson United Methodist Church. It was built with stone, glass, and block. No nails were used in its construction. The pastor, Rev. Dixon, gave a history of the structure.

After the tour we had our closing banquet in the church fellowship hall. After a short business meeting and the awarding of certificates to the 11 new Grand Indiana Auto Tour participants the group was dismissed.



6. A 100 year+ old oak tree is a must-see during our Veraestau mansion stop along with **7.** a grand tour of the home which sports period furniture. **8.** Weberding's Carving Shop was a fascinating stop, enlightening GIAT participants in the world of custom wood carving **9.** Samples of the many projects going on at Weberding's - these people can carve! **10.** A little Shakespeare never hurt anyone, especially when his portrait is one of many famous authors decorating the library ceiling at The Sisters of Saint Francis convent in Oldenburg, Indiana.





11. Beautiful stained glass windows enhance the worship space of the Chapel of the Sisters of Saint Francis Convent. **12.** Period basketball uniforms help decorate the Milan Museum which honors the 1954 team that won the state championship against Muncie that year. **13.** More beauty to behold at the Sisters of Saint Francis Convent **14.** This Corvette takes a well-earned rest after a full day of touring. **15.** GIAT gets back down on the farm — the Michaela Farm, that is, which supplies produce to the Convent. **16.** What GIAT is complete without a number of non-automobile modes of transportation. At Metamora we enjoyed a train ride on the Whitewater Railroad and a horse-drawn Canal Boat ride.