

1982 VOYAGE TO BLOOMINGTON

as recalled by Peter C. Hallock

On Wednesday, June 23, the "crew", consisting of Lewis, Cliff, Gary Daugherty, Don Ash, the "toad from Orlando and I, gathered at Gateway Utilities for the departure. While driving westward on Interstate 10 in the motor home, we practiced and perfected dashboard disassembly and electrical repair, as well as underway driver changes. By Wednesday evening, we had reached Hendersonville (state unknown) for a gourmet dinner at Pizza Hut. Following dinner we refueled, changed fuel filters (the RV had just had a new auxiliary gas tank installed), and liberated license plates from Titsworth Toyota and headed northward. Lewis, now shirtless and completely soaked from the fuel filter change, was our driver and Manhattans were basically in control of the vehicle.

After accidentally exploring every third exit ramp, the Parliamentarian called for the vote on a driver and navigator change. As might be expected, raising the question of a new driver caused the Parliamentarian to be THE new driver and Cliff somehow managed to steer a straight course to Terra Haute, Indiana.

After stops at several motels which were all full, we elected to bunk in the motor home at the back of the Holiday Inn parking lot. Lewis insisted that air conditioning was mandatory so that we could all enjoy the gasoline fumes which he was still carrying, but fortunately the generator refused to start.

We were awakened at dark-thirty the next morning to the sounds of the pit crew attempting to repair the generator. Even after acquiring part of a chain link fence and anything else that wasn't tied down in the parking lot, we concluded we needed professional help to ensure that the generator in its entirety did not fall through the bottom of the motor home. We stopped at a small, one-man welding shop in Terra Haute and with the aid of six supervisors, the one welder was able to fabricate a new frame for the generator. With this complete, the generator still refused to start so, undaunted, Lewis steered a direct course for the nearest RV Dealership. The dealership, appropriately named Wet Night Recreational Vehicles, quickly installed a new, electronic module in the generator in exchange for a healthy portion of Lewis' entertainment money, earmarked for Bloomington. With this behind us, the rest of the trip into Bloomington was rather uneventful and we arrived late Thursday afternoon.

Although we had no reservations, Gary and I were able to get two rooms in the new Best Western, adjacent to the Fairgrounds where the meet was to take place the following day. Lew somehow convinced the guard that the RV was a full custom Corvette and should be allowed into the Fairgrounds.

Friday was spent touring the Fairgrounds and much to our chagrin, few of the vendors were there and set up that early. None of us were able to find anything we "had to have" and the major effort Friday afternoon consisted of sweet talking another set of reservations for Friday evening at the Best Western.

Saturday morning we awoke at 6:00 A.M. to find the Flea Market already in full swing. We all bolted forward to locate our "good deals".

I knew it was going to be a bad day when the first thing I found inside the Fairgrounds was the broken windshield in my rental car. As time went on, though, the day did improve. Lew located an original battery and windshield for his '54, I was forced to pay the outrageous sum of \$15.00 for a passenger side door for my wife's '76, and Cliff resisted purchasing anything, saying that prices would be lower late Sunday afternoon.

That evening Gary and I attended the Certification Board School, while the rest of the crew went to Springfield, Illinois, to sample the Car Craft Spring Nationals Meet there. When they returned, their stories were unbelievable. Picture, if you will, an entire town taken over by mid-60s throw-backs interested only in street racing.

Sunday morning Gary and I attended the pre-Certification Meeting and then went on to judge six cars in our '80 to '82 class. We then had a seventh car added, which was the last Corvette built at the St. Louis plant on July 31, 1981.

Sunday afternoon we all rushed around attempting to make our last minute purchases. Cliff finally did purchase his stainless steel brakes, but not until the prices had fallen like a rock and there were only two sets remaining on the entire Fairgrounds. Late Sunday afternoon we went through the Polish circus exercise of attempting to pack the motor home.

To say that we left and drove straight through, arriving in Jacksonville Monday afternoon would be a great oversimplification. Everyone of us intended to drive straight through, but the motor home would have no part of it. We stopped and replaced at least seven fuel filters, one spark plug wire, and the air cleaner. The motor home was so overjoyed by all that good treatment it decided to allow the shower to run wild on all our parts stored therein. Once in Jacksonville, Lew got his revenge and deposited five gallons of diesel fuel in the gas tank.

In summary, the Bloomington weekend was like no other. There were over 100 cars in the Certification Meet, over 150 for sale, and probably over 1,000 in the parking lot. In the Flea Market, you could buy anything from a new in-the-wrapper complete car to a mere fragment of what was left after disaster struck. All of us thoroughly enjoyed it, spent too much, and can't wait to do it again next year.

On behalf of the entire group, I must give Lew a tremendous thanks for the ride up and back. I am convinced that if the motor home had quit entirely, but the flow of Manhattans had continued, Lew would have pushed it all the way up and all the way back.

NO, MY CAR IS NOT FINISHED YET.