

Brief Snapshot of International Model A Convention Vancouver BC - August 2010, by Di & Peter Paice

GREAT CARS, GREAT PEOPLE, GREAT FUN!

Our main reason for going to Canada was to enjoy the weeklong International Model A Ford Convention, meet the people who sold us 'Daisy' our Model A, and see some great sites.

We stayed for the week at the Vancouver International Delta Airport Hotel. This was the home base for the Model A Convention and the view from our 7th floor window overlooking the carpark was impressive. Seminars on every facet of building and restoring the Model A, 1928-30 era fashion workshops, scenic tours, markets, museums and dinners all awaited our enjoyment.

Peter was particularly pleased to partner a guy from Alabama, and win the 'Model A car games'. He also joined the Kiwis as the 'Downunder Team' in the 'fix the car' game, but they stuffed it up so much that the officials took nearly an hour to get it going.

905 people attended the convention from all over the US, us Aussies plus a Qld couple, some Kiwis and a few from Norway. We all shared a common interest and made some lovely new friends. About 450 Model A's verged on the venue from afar.

We were thrilled to meet Jack & Dianna Richard from adjoining Washington State who sold us our Model A 3 years ago. Jack had just completed a replica of a mini Deussen made from a Model A by Gordon Beuhrig who designed bodies for Deussen in 1930. They drove from their home in Vancouver Washington.

Di did the first seminar 'Lady Drives a Model A' and road test with lovely new friend Patti from Oregon, sharing her coupe with the crunchy 2nd gear. No matter how careful the double shuffle - we both did the crunch!

'Sheepless in Vancouver Rally' was our first group outing where we were all given different clues to find landmarks all over Vancouver. Following others was not an option as everyone had to find their own answers to specific questions. We passengered with Ewart from Alabama which was hilarious as he was not too fussed about the rules of the road. Illegal shortcuts were not out of the question. We came equal first with 14 other cars. There were Model A's going in every different direction all over town.

The Steveston Historic Cannery trip we travelled with Jeanie & Ed James from California. This was a fascinating guided tour with history of the early days of the salmon industry. We enjoyed fish & chips on the waterfront.

Peter went to the famous Jim Ratsoy Private Car Collection with Jeff from Seattle in his roadster. Two massive buildings housed at least 200 beautifully restored and running cars from the '20s through to the classic '60s American cars. He employs 3 permanent staff just to keep the vehicles restored and in perfect running order. He also had an amazing antique collection of juke boxes and slot machines. Only opens 6 times per year for charity events.

Di did the bus tour to the famous Granville Markets, guided tour of the city and the spectacular Van Deussen Gardens.



Thursday everyone participated in the Grand Model A Tour to the Historic Burnaby Village. The cars were spread amongst the shops, streets and buildings and a lovely lunch was provided. Everything here was in the era of the Model A. All the cars travelled in convoy through the suburbs, attracting lots of attention from onlookers.



Friday was the last day of the convention and there was a bus trip to Grouse Mountain Skyride via gondola to the top of the mountain. The views back over Vancouver were breathtakingly awesome, with a choice of shows at the top. ie. birds of prey, lumberjack show, walks to lookouts and an open chairlift ride to the mountain peak. There were also harness zipline rides for the young and brave.



Friday night gala dinner and presentation was relocated to the Sheraton Hotel due to greater than expected numbers attending. Those needing transport were taken by vintage bus. Everyone dressed in era fashion, having a wonderful night with a magician mingling and entertaining before and after the scrumptious dinner.

Ewart & Peter received their trophy for winning the car games, which Peter gave to Ewart as it was his car after all! He seemed very proud and happy to have company as his wife doesn't accompany him. We said good byes that night, and again on Saturday morning. We have kept in touch with some of these lovely people since then and sent them photos and some real Aussie stuff.



After the final convention breakfast we waited for our small economy hire car which turned out to be a Chrysler 300 impressively large sedan. It arrived in the rain, so Peter had to learn to drive this large mafia staff car on the wrong side of the road in the rain whilst negotiating busy freeways. We had a return visit to the great Granville Markets of Vancouver, located on the inner harbourway.

We continued our travels to Whistler alpine ski resort - breathtaking with stately green pine trees, steep rugged snowcapped mountains and fast flowing summer streams. Next morning we took the gondola to the top of the mountain, then chairlift to the snowcapped peak. The longest gondola ride in the world crossed the valley to Blackcombe Mountain, then open chairlift took us back down to trendy Whistler. An unforgettable ride, with sightings of black bears.



We had a great trip east to Lillooet, an old goldmining town. Again we were awestruck by the magnificent beauty of the dramatic snow capped mountains, deep blue lakes and rivers. We drove south down the spectacular Fraser River Gorge to Hope and crossed US Border delayed & feeling like criminals following paperwork issues.

South west to the beautiful harbour city of Seattle, proudly surrounding the space needle. 'Ride the Duck' tour through the streets then onto the harbour to view 'Sleepless in Seattle' floating house - a 'cheesy, touristy' ride, but great fun while the driver changed hats, joked and incited a group singalong. Back to the overcrowded hot street markets.



We drove across the dry rugged interior of Washington State, stayed in Spokane for a couple of nights to see a hotrod show, then north west crossing the stunningly spectacular Cascade Mountains. We were struck by their awesome grandeur, and they were just as delightful as the Canadian snowcapped mountains we had seen.

We were impressed with the friendliness of the Canadian and American people - just like Australians, only with an accent.