

CANYONLANDS III

By Russ Furstnow

The Canyonlands III tour was a huge success, thanks to the 440 people who brought their Model T's to southwestern Utah for the third and final edition of the Canyon Country Model T Club's event. The tour "officially" began on Sunday, June 21, 2009, but over half of the tour participants came to the Shilo Inn for early registration on Saturday to get registered!! What a turnout!! There were 202 cars registered from Maine to California and Canada to Texas, and everyone was excited about the week's events. Tour bags were stuffed with navy blue tour shirts, a sandstone commemorative plaque, and a solid copper Arizona license plate with the tour logo and car number stamped into the plate.

Sunday, June 21

Sunday was set aside for registration, and the hospitality room was buzzing with Model T friends. The Canyonlands hospitality room was a focal point for the tour, and food, drink and good fellowship were always available. Everyone was talking about a new Canyonlands III event...the radiator cap competition, which was to be judged at the evening's kick-off picnic. Cash prizes were planned for those who had the most unique and interesting radiator cap, and over half of the participants built special radiator caps. Some people who had registered early took side tours and you could hear stories throughout the parking lot about the most recent Model T tour or restoration project. By 4:00 pm, most people had driven to Jacob Hamblin Park for the picnic and to vote for their favorite radiator cap. Robert Houston, a local caterer, provided a superb "all-you-could-eat" roast beef and chicken dinner, which was served buffet style. Everyone raved about the food and the entertainment provided by Jimmy Cooper, a local country western singer. Following dinner, the community was invited to come to the park for an ice cream social with the Model T folks, and over 1000 ice cream bars were consumed. Everyone enjoyed the special radiator caps and community members were also allowed to vote for their favorite. Following the ice cream social, everyone piled into the Model T's and headed out for a parade of Kanab....what a great way to end the day!

Monday, June 22

Monday's tour sent the Model T's north from Kanab to Bryce Canyon National Park, and the round-trip drive was over 175 miles. This tour would take its toll on some of the Model T's as nine Fords had to be returned to Kanab on trouble trailers. Dave and Marilyn Huson, who drove their trustworthy 1923 coupe, were the first to break down with a blown rod with only one hour and fifteen minutes into the tour!! Dave repaired the car, but it would break down again on the last day of the tour and needed to be towed in once more....sorry Dave. Tour participants boarded shuttle buses to enter Bryce Canyon. The shuttle service stopped at all lookout points and made the trip easy and enjoyable. As they left the park, many Model T's stopped at Red Canyon for a quick snack stop provided by the tour hosts. Everyone commented about the beauty of Bryce

Canyon and the leisurely drive to and from Kanab and Bryce Canyon.....no stop signs or traffic signals on this tour!!! Sack lunches were provided for everyone, and the lunches were tasty and plentiful.

Following each day's tour, most people visited the hospitality room, which was open from 4:00 pm-6:00 pm each day. Some people worked on their Fords in the parking lot and you could hear stories of the day's events, including the breakdowns and other woes. In the hospitality room, popcorn, cookies and other snacks and drinks were available for everyone on the tour. There was even a "tour newscast and video", which took the place of the traditional newsletter, and this video brought everyone up-to-date with the events of the tour.

Tuesday, June 23

Today's tour took the Model T's to Coral Pink Sand Dunes State Park, Colorado City and Pipe Spring National Monument. At the dunes, many Model T'ers took off their shoes and hiked to the top of a small sand dune that overlooked the park. It was great to see all these "old folks" frolicking in the sand like kids! Following the park was a five-mile stretch of dirt road (some said it was sand) that challenged the best drivers and the Model T's. Two Fords broke their rear-axle tie rods, but these were repaired in Colorado City.

Residents of Colorado City belong to the Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints Church, where the practice of polygamy is allowed. The tour of this town was an optional one, but most tour participants decided to tour this unique community. The tour committee alerted the community that the Model T's would be coming, and the town's children were eager to receive rides in the Fords.....and the Model T drivers must have given every child in Colorado City a ride. The children respectfully lined up under trees at the city park, and Model T drivers would just load the children into the cars (at times it looked like an "E-ticket" line at Disneyland). The children and drivers had a great time, and many drivers were rewarded with fresh loaves of bread and strawberry preserves from the gracious Colorado City mothers.

The next stop was at Pipe Spring National Monument, a fort that was built at the direction of Brigham Young. This was the only spot where a reliable source of water was available in the 1850's, and tours of the fort were given every thirty minutes by park rangers.

The evening dinner included a western show that featured the tour participants as members of the cast, and because of the size of the Model T group, only one-half of the group went to dinner on Tuesday. The menu included all-you-could-eat roast beef, cowboy potatoes and salad, and once again, everyone was filled with great food.

Wednesday, June 24

Cedar Breaks National Monument, with an elevation of 10,350 feet, would be the final destination for Wednesday's tour. Drivers were notified there would be some eight

percent grades, but that did not deter many from touring to this beautiful monument. While climbing the grade to Cedar Breaks, the vegetation changed from sage brush to beautiful ponderosa pine trees and quaking aspen, and as the elevations rose, fir trees took over the landscape. Cedar Breaks is an example of severe wind and water erosion which left a beautiful scar on the side of the mountain, and while similar to Bryce Canyon, this monument is unique and very beautiful. A snack stop was located at the monument, and everyone stopped and filled up with goodies. Wednesday night's dinner was identical to last night's event but included the second half of the tour group, and the western show and the food was a hit once again.

Thursday, June 2

This tour was the longest drive of the week, and ended at the north rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The north rim sits 1000 feet higher than the more popular south rim, but the grandeur and beauty at the north rim far exceed that of the south rim. The San Francisco Peaks, at over 12,000 feet and nearly 75 miles away, could be easily seen from the edge of the north rim. At over 8800 feet, Point Imperial proved to be one of the highlights of the day, although the drive to this point was challenging. As the day wound down, and the drivers were returning to Kanab, many Model T's encountered a dramatic head wind that would rival any winds from the Midwest. One driver commented, "I had the throttle and spark pulled all the way down and was going downhill, but I could only get up to 28 miles per hour!" (That's some serious wind!) Thankfully, the wind was only apparent for the last twenty-five miles of the drive.

Friday, June 26

While the drive to Zion National Park was the shortest drive of the tour, the destination proved to be one of the most popular with the Model T drivers. Everyone had to drive through a one-mile long tunnel, which necessitated lights and a high degree of concentration, but after traveling through the tunnel, the spectacular scenery of Zion Canyon emerged. Drivers were instructed to park their cars in Springdale, UT and take the park shuttle into the park because parking at the visitor's center was sparse, and the small town allowed everyone a good parking spot. The park shuttle took tour participants into Zion Canyon, and many commented about the sheer cliffs and grandeur of the canyon.

The final banquet was held at Kanab High School, and once again was catered by Robert Houston. Robert fed everyone an excellent prime rib dinner. Special awards were handed out and the winners of the radiator cap competition were announced. The most popular radiator caps were produced by Mike Vaughn, Bob Keller and Howard Clayton. Everyone had a great time on the tour, and most importantly, everyone had a safe tour. The Canyon Country Model T Club members want to thank everyone who came to Kanab.....we had a great time hosting our final edition of the Canyonlands Tour. As everyone says, "the third time is the charm", and this tour was truly charmed with beautiful scenery, renewing old acquaintances and making new friends.

Youth Activities at Canyonlands III

There were twenty-seven kids attending the Canyonlands III tour and special events were planned by the tour's youth coordinator, Ashlee Furstnow. Ashlee decided to assemble a special tour bag for the kids, and this bag contained goodies that matched the age of the youngster. The bags were handed out as the adults received their tour bags, and you could see the excitement in each child's face as they inventoried the items in their bag.

On the first day of the tour, kids were encouraged to wear clothing that could get wet, as there was a "splash park" and a big toy at Jacob Hamblin Park. The kids had great fun getting wet while the adults visited. Also, each youngster had a ballot for the radiator cap competition, and many took special care voting for their favorite cap.

On Monday, the kids got together at the park again, and enjoyed the splash park without the adults. On Thursday, Ashlee planned a movie and pizza party, and everyone had all the pizza they could eat while watching the movie, "Madagascar II." By all accounts, the kids had a great time on the tour and enjoyed one another's company. Thanks to Ashlee for planning the special time for our MTFCA youngsters.