

Founders Tour Uses Two Adventurous Routes

By **CARL D. BENSON**

The Founders' Tour is one of the six "Stone Bridge Driver" venues that present about 100 of the 500-plus vintage and classic cars of the Grand Prix Festival of Watkins Glen.

The Founders' Tour is a special group of participants known as "Stone Bridge Drivers." They bring their cars, and guests back to the original home of the United States Grand Prix - Watkins Glen

The nostalgic day includes a lake-to-lake cross-country grand tour, lunch, two laps of the original race circuit and special reserved downtown parking. As a Grand Prix Festival visitor you will see special sports and classic cars all driven and parked right before your eyes and the walking is easy in and around downtown Watkins Glen for viewing the field.

The grand tour group is split into two routes originating at the Pleasant Valley Winery in Hammondsport that offer the very same driver challenges that the original Grand Prix drivers encountered on their way to the fame and glory. The Stone Bridge Driver and guest will also view some of the region's most spectacular world-class scenery that this motoring experience can offer.

The routes are designed so that they meet one another along the highway at some point and then regroup for the downtown display.

Hosted by Pleasant Valley Winery situated at the

southern tip of Keuka Lake, the drivers arrive at 10 a.m. They can enjoy the winery's museum and gift shopping, as well as sharing time together for some bench race discussions with other tour drivers and guests. An official drivers meeting will release them to the rally course.

The grand tour then fires up just after 11 a.m. for the exciting and challenging cross-country drive. When the group arrives in downtown Watkins Glen, drivers stage on Franklin Street and take two laps of the original Watkins Glen circuit. Along the "old course," drivers will experience the historic road racing landmarks, including Cornett's Stone Bridge, Big Bend and Milliken's Corner.

Downtown spectators should watch for the tour at about 2:30 p.m. and have their cameras ready as the Founders' Tour takes its historic laps and parks downtown for display.

Want to join the official Watkins Glen Grand Prix Festival "Stone Bridge Drivers"? Just register for any of our Festival driving events, the Founders' Tour, the Glenora Run Road Rallye, the Tour de Marque, the Sporting Roadster Tour, the GlenKhana, and the Concours d'Elegance.

Come with us next year and share the nostalgia of grand touring at our nation's original home of Grand Prix road racing - Watkins Glen - where you and your car can be one of the stars of the rich historic racing heritage. Enroll early, as limited openings fill quickly. Contact us at our Web site www.grandprixfestival.com or call (607) 535-3003.

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