

## **356 Registry East Coast Holiday**

*Article and Photographs by Ted Hunter*

Many months ago, Kathie and I decided to go to our first 356 East Coast Holiday, the reasons were location, location, location, and the event. Three hours away, in French Lick, Indiana, stands West Baden Springs Resort. So the 356 event, the nearness to Hamilton and the resort itself were the deciding factors.

Upon arrival, three arches and up a flower lined brick driveway that would make Oxford envious, one drives around the large resort nestled in trees with a long veranda until the entrance and parking lot come into sightline. Wow.

The entrance is packed with parked 356 Porsches and up a hill is a parking lot full of 356's; 100-150, I could not count. From all over. Of all different types. Wow.

The Bell Captain tells us the routine: unload and go up to the lot and oh, yeah, the car wash is around back. So, Kathie checks in and I bee-line straight to wash our car, a 1962B sunroof coupe. Can't have a dirty car in this crowd. The car wash is back where one of the first-ever indoor automobile garages was located.

Park the car and head on in. Wow! Again, for those of you that do not know West Baden, it was once called the 8<sup>th</sup> Wonder of the World. Built around 1912, it had the largest unsupported dome in the world until the Huston Astrodome was built in 1965, is 200 feet across, 5 stories of rooms and then the dome, 250 rooms, all located in a circle surrounding the tall enormous domed atrium. Your eyes just keep going up and up and up. The place is beautiful. It was built in less than one year, was made of concrete so it would be fire proof, and had a new power supply, direct current, from its own power plant by some young inventor named Thomas Edison.

The next day was spent seeing old friends, catching up, looking ahead, and remembering. Explored the grounds and checked out the other resort, French Lick, with its casino and just relaxed. Tech sessions were also going on all day. Ergo, a laid back day.

10 cars were brought into the atrium, A and Pre-A Porsches, including OVR and Drei Staaten Gruppe's Dick Weiss' Carrera GT Speedster. Also present were one of 5 Benter Porsches and a one-of-a-kind Sauter Roadster race car. Also present was a very red 904 which Jim and Brenda Perrin brought.

Saturday was the 'Concours'. Everyone brings their cars out, and votes for the class winners and such. No judges. Again, talking with the owners and hearing their stories makes this event special. The day was gorgeous, and the cars were also in the setting of a formal garden and the tree-lined resort byways.

Judging? Vic Elford, who spoke that night at the banquet in the atrium, described his choice of his favorite as his favorite color-blue, and his preference of coupes over cabs. No white gloves here. Dick Weiss' Carrera Speedster was the popular vote winner in the Special Interest Group.

Probably over thirty 356 Porsches made the drive from the Drei Staaten/OVR regions, and a special thank you was given by the event chairman to Drei Staaten Gruppe for their volunteer work.

The event ended with the banquet, Vic Elford describing his racing exploits, and then some conversation and dancing. The next morning, early, was a flea-market for all things 356 and Porsche and then home.

This event is special for it keeps people with a shared interest in touch, allows for new contacts and friendships to grow and helps all keep the 356 faith.