



2015 Lincoln Highway Henry B. Joy Tour

JUNE 27–JULY 8

JOURNAL REPORT | DAY 1 | June 27, 2015

Dear Friend,

Today was the first official day of the 2015 Lincoln Highway Henry B. Joy Tour from Detroit to San



Francisco. The real beginning, however, was on June 21st when *Elvira*, a 1955 Packard Clipper, was loaded onto the upper deck of a transport for shipment from Escondido, CA to Detroit MI.

I met Elvira in Detroit on June 25th and we spent the day getting ready at this end. Last night, daughter Sally flew in from Manhattan to join me for the first 4 days of the drive to San Francisco.

There are 55 cars making the drive. Click here: <http://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/tour/2015/cars/> to see photos of 31 of the cars. Note that 7 of the 9 oldest cars on the tour are Packards.

The purpose of the trip is to retrace the trip made by Packard President Henry B. Joy who drove a 1914 Packard from Detroit to San Francisco in 1915 on the recently completed Lincoln Highway, the first coast-to-coast highway in the U.S. He left Detroit on Tuesday May 27th and arrived in San Francisco on Friday June 18, 1915. He drove for a total of 171 hours over a period of 23 days and covered 2,885 miles. His average speed during the 171 hours of actual driving time was 16.8 miles per hour. For us, it will be 2,836 miles over a period of 12 days.

At 7:30 am this morning we met in the pouring rain at the Packard Proving Grounds for the official start of the tour. We were invited by the management of the Proving Grounds to park the Packards indoors in the building used by Packard during WWII to test tanks. This was a photo-op for the Packards on the tour.



The buildings at the Proving Grounds are spectacular. It is truly extraordinary that they were saved from the wrecking ball in 1998 by the Packard Motor Foundation.



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We departed in the pouring rain and quickly experienced water entering the car around the top of the windshield. We had a significant leak, water was flowing freely into the car and directly onto our feet and ankles. Also, the defroster wasn't working so we were wiping fog from the inside of the windshield with a handkerchief about every 2 to 3 minutes. Nonetheless, we persevered.

Our first stop was the Packard factory, abandoned by Packard in 1956.



At over one million square feet, it is the largest abandoned structure in North America. The good news is that the complex was recently purchased by a gentleman from Peru who intends to rehabilitate the property as a shopping mall and office building. We wish him luck.

His first task was to place a banner on the bridge over East Grand Avenue that closely resembles the



original architecture of the bridge (including a faux clock). It looks very real as most of us thought it was the real thing. Work is being behind the banner to restore the bridge to its former glory. Here is a photo of some our Packards returning to their birthplace. The red ring around the rear window of the green Packard isn't lipstick; it's read duct tape. Coincidentally, we installed gray duct tape around Elvira's windshield to stop the mini-waterfall above Elvira's dashboard.



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The next stop was the abandoned Detroit Train Station, no longer used since Amtrak ceased service to Detroit in 1988. It is 18 stories and was built in 1913. The top floors were never finished and never used. Another sad testament as to the overall condition of the City of Detroit.



Our final stop of the day was the Studebaker Museum in South Bend, Indiana. The sole reason for our sojourn to this museum was to see the Packard Predictor, a “Car of the Future” built by Packard in 1956. It was hand-built by a team under the direction of Packard Sr Designer Richard Teague in 1956 - in less than 90 days.



TOMORROW: We roll out at 8:00 am headed for Rochelle, Illinois.

-Mark