

“Made in America”

In between watching Hurricane Ike make landfall and the Presidential Campaign on television, Bob & I took a day to visit some local factories. We took a tour of the Silver Stream Trailer Factory and the Kitchen Aid Factory. We were quite impressed with both. Silver Stream has slowed down as has other similar factories, but continues to run a sound operation. Kitchen Aid, a totally different type of factory, is going full steam and has grown with additional international sales. One thing in common with both tours is that both have made some changes to keep up with the times, but some basic elements remain the same. It reminds me of the saying, "If it isn't broke, don't try and fix it."

We were parked in a military campground on the Wright-Paterson AFB in Dayton, OH. From here, we took a day to take in the two tours. The Airstream Plant is located in Jackson Center, OH approximately 50 miles from the base. The ride to get there was pleasant, riding through farm country. This is one of the oldest RV manufacturing companies. Some of the things that caught our attention was that a significant amount of hand tooling of components is done. The workers are trained to do several jobs and rotate, which is something the Harley Davidson plant does, as well. The style of an outer aluminum shell has continued to be a trademark throughout. It is clearly a well made product, with a long line of faithful followers. Our tour guide told us that they recently brought in the first Silver Stream made, number 001, that someone donated. It needs to be refurbished and added to the line of antiques. That says a lot about the product.

Kitchen Aid, owned by Whirlpool is located in Greenville, OH. This is a product that has clearly done, and continues to do, well. There has been newer models, of this product, and new attachments to accomplish different tasks in preparing foods. The basic motor base, that the additions are attached to, has not changed. Therefore new attachments fit older versions without a problem - a quality product. We don't have many pictures to show, as most factories frown on picture taking in their factories.

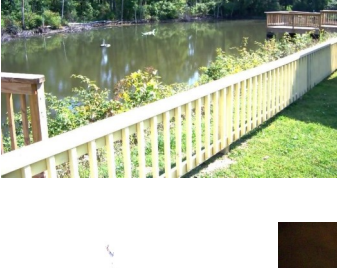
Before leaving the Dayton area, we encountered the wrath of Hurricane Ike! We expected some high winds, but not what we got. By mid afternoon Sunday, I felt we were on a boat on high seas rather than a parked RV. Those gusts hit 65 to 75 mph, but no rain. We brought in our slides and dish down. It was scary! No one expected those high winds up where we were. Needless to say the power went out and we went on generator power.



The Capital of Pennsylvania

On our way to Manheim, we stopped at Pine Cove RV Resort in Charleroi, PA, which is just South of Pittsburgh. This was a cute campground that existed solely for the large swimming pool (play ground) located there. Great for family vacations. The pool was closed when we arrived, but campground was still open. Campground was up on a hill overlooking a small lake, where campers could fish. Very scenic. We were in a back in site overlooking the water. See below.

We arrived at Pinch Pond RV Park in Manheim a little early, which gave us an opportunity to visit the PA State Capital in Harrisburg. We were glad we did, as this was one of the most artistically beautiful Capitals we have seen. Our tour guide stated that the Smithsonian put the Pennsylvania Capital in the top three State Capitals in terms of artistic quality; which is what Joseph Miller Huston, the architect, intended. It is a "palace of art" and many of it's artistic pieces are considered priceless. Much of the art and artifacts represent State industries of coal, oil, and steel, as well as the part it played in the history of this country. It was reopened in 10/04/1906 following a fire that destroyed the building in 1897. The East Wing was added in 1987 and altogether covers 5.5 acres. In the early days, many PA residents had the foresight to save artifacts that were being removed from the building and when it was rebuilt, were generous enough to return them. In 12/2006, it was announced that the Capital was declared a National Historic Landmark. The Capitol Preservation Committee monitors and is responsible for restoration and maintenance of the building and all the artifacts. Below is one of the stained glass windows in the Senate Chamber completed by Van Ingen, the artist. I think the guide said he was a student affiliated with the Tiffany Glass Production, which makes them priceless. If you haven't seen it, it is well worth seeing.



HR 400 Club Fall Rally
Manheim, PA

Our Fall Rally officially started on 9/27/2008. Camping in the East is quite different from camping out West. Really have to get used to the hills and tall trees again. From the time we got to our camp site, it took one and a half hours to get into a position where we could connect to the internet satellite! We finally went in backwards, which gave us a hole in the trees so we could pick up a signal.

The whole Summer we were in Northern Indiana, which is settled by Amish and here we are again in PA, surrounded by the PA Dutch. They sure know how to cook and if there is one thing the Chapter 400 does well, it is eat!! Among some great restaurants, we had a great time at the Shady Maple Smorgasbord. Besides eating, we had some great tours, which included the *Cornwall Iron Furnace*, the *Green Dragon* (a local flea market), the *Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania*, and the *Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire*. What was different at this rally was our own creative entertainment. Members were requested to come up with some unusual items they carry around in their coach and to develop an entertaining presentation around it. Someone had a piece of Glacial Ice from Newfoundland and some others had formal dresses they never wear! Remember, we are all full time. Then to top that off, we were entertained by our very own musicians. A great time was had by all. See pictures below. End of Rally and time to go home to Myrtle Beach!

