

# 2022 Eastern Steam Car Tour

Sunday May 8 through the night of Friday May 13  
Syria, Virginia



*April view from Graves Mountain Lodge, Syria, VA.*

**The 2022 Eastern Steam Car Tour is deviating from the more recent tours in two key aspects. One**, it is a driving tour featuring true one and two lane rural county roads through farmland. Our headquarters will be in Syria, population 161, in Madison County. Madison County's population density is 41 people per square-mile, which is much like that in the Bourdon's home county, Windsor County VT, home to 56 people/sq-mi. Recent tours have been in counties with population densities of 1,579/sq-mi in MA(2021), 991 in CT(2019), and 1,131 in DE(2018). Madison County is rural, yet prosperous with a March unemployment of 3.4%. One way to our tour HQ is Cty-670 a 4 mile paved, dead-end road branching off of VA-231. The other is a 12 mile unpaved route. When I drove the 12-mile in April, I saw 3 vehicles moving, one was this pickup truck as it forded the Rose River.



**TWO**, this will be a *modified progressive tour*, much like the 1985 Woodstock Tour which went over the mountains to Lake Champlain, stayed 2 nights at Shelburne, and returned to Woodstock. [*A brief aside: That was my 3rd Steam Car Tour. On Wednesday, on the other side of the mountain from Woodstock, my gauge glass broke. I approached Tom Marshall for help. He said, "You are already a good steam man. Run with both pumps till you prime, back down to one pump, go a few miles and repeat. You will find a rhythm and you will be fine". - I was, learned a lot, and gained confidence.*] On our tour we will have Sunday and Monday nights in Syria, Tuesday and Wednesday nights in Luray Virginia, and the last two nights, Thursday and Friday, back in Syria.

We **do NOT release or vacate** our Graves Mountain Lodge rooms when we depart for Luray. We need only carry what we need for those two nights in Luray.

We will **NOT** always have spigots and hoses available when out on the road, so make sure your syphon is working. Madison County is replete with free flowing clear streams.

Expect average daytime highs of 72 degrees and average night lows of 50 degrees. Three weeks before our tour time is often the peak time for dogwoods and redbuds. Depending on when spring pops, we may see just a few, or many, wildflowers in bloom. Of course, it can rain, it can be chilly, and it can be hot.

We will do less than 25 miles on highways, those being US-29, US-33, and US-211. Most of our miles will be on paved county roads, with a few miles of well maintained unpaved roads, at least one ford, and 34 miles of ridge top driving on the *Skyline Drive* (water has been sourced). Madison County has 5 traffic lights which we will use to cross US-29, a heavily trafficked 4-lane highway. Other than that, we will occasionally encounter traffic lights in and on the way to and from Luray. I have done every mile of the tour in a steamer or pre-WW-1 car.

## Brief Tour Outline

<u>Sunday</u> : Graves:	Opening dinner.
<u>Monday</u> : Graves:	~82 mi w/Kerosene &D, including James Madison's home.
<u>Tuesday</u> : Mimslyn:	~85 mi w/K&D, a climb, Skyline Drive & descent to Luray.
<u>Wednesday</u> : Mimslyn:	~65 mi w/K&D, beautiful FORT valley.
<u>Thursday</u> : Graves:	~80 mi w/K&D, with a climb, a descent & backroads.
<u>Friday</u> : Graves:	~75 mi w/Diesel only, farm backroads, load up & final dinner.
Saturday:	Homeward bound.



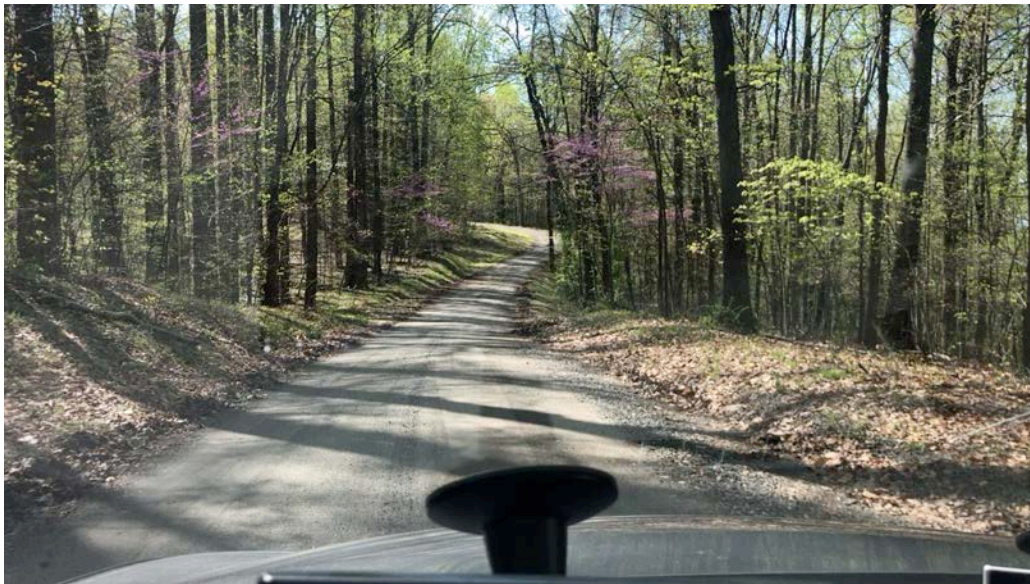
*The FORT VALLEY is at the top in yellow, blue circle just below is town of LURAY, and the other blue circle is SYRIA. Day routes are shown in yellow.*

**On Tuesday we will steam** through *The Shenandoah National Park*, going 34 miles north on *The Skyline Drive* and then west in to adjacent Page County, where we will spend the next two nights in Luray, Page's County Seat and home of Luray Caverns. I recommend Luray Caverns, and with the Luray Caverns' ticket, you can visit their car museum. Once down-talked, revise your thinking, the once ratty collection has benefitted from a major effort and is now quite a nice museum. You will have time Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday to visit both of these. They are 8/10ths of a mile from our hotel.

**On Wednesday** it is recommended that you take the planned, ~65 mile, day trip up into and then along the Fort Valley. Climbing up to it will let the hill climbing prowess of your steamer SHINE. The bark of a number of steamers climbing through the woods will be worth remembering. It will be best to carry a picnic lunch, you will be in the George Washington Forest, its quite lovely. The return drive is on modern South Page Valley Road and state roads.

## FUEL

The *Sheetz* in the town of Madison, 8 miles from Graves Mountain Lodge, has kerosene and Diesel. Thirty-five miles into Monday's drive you will have both kerosene and Diesel in the town of Orange. In Luray Tuesday afternoon, all day Wednesday, and early Thursday, there is Kerosene & Diesel at *East End EXXON*, only 1.1 miles from our lodging. If you depart Luray on Thursday with a full tank you will easily get back the the *Sheetz* at Madison. Top up there and you will be fine for Friday's drive.



*Driving along the 12-mile back road into Syria: April 13, 2021.*

## **GRAVES Mountain Lodge, Syria**

Sunday, Monday, Thursday & Friday



*The Graves family's 1857 'new ordinary' on the property and still their family homeplace.*

Captain Thomas Graves, arrived Virginia in 1608 and served in the Virginia Assembly in Jamestown and later in the House of Burgesses. The Graves family has been innkeepers here, off-and-on, since 1852. That first establishment, called the 'ordinary', was within what is now The Shenandoah National Park.



*11 family members, 3 generations, currently work the place. The 5 youngest are the 15th generation to live in Virginia and the 7th to call this land home.*



*Meals are served in the large building at the center. Up & right is the 22-room RIDGECREST which, with its function room, is fully reserved for us. Mostly obscured to the left is HILLTOP, where we have a 10-room block. The "line" across the bottom of the photo is your home syphoning stream.*

In RIDGECREST, along with our 22 rooms, is a functions room for us for the duration of our stay. Would anyone organize a games night ? Would there be interest in having a square dance with a caller and local string band for one of those nights ? We have two free nights here, Monday and Thursday.



The meals here are legendary and employ many home grown ingredients. Graves makes their own hard cider and serve it and other local beers and wines. If you want a mixed drink, bring your own. That has been cleared with Missy Graves.

Graves Mountain hosted my high school Varsity Baseball

Letter banquet and then one week later, my father-son graduation dinner on Thursday night June 1st, 1972. Classmate Duke Merrick's dad arrived with moonshine for us, it was a different time. I have 11 years of memories here, its one of my back yards.



**Truck & trailer parking** for the week,  
**Dinners:** Sun-Mon, Thurs-Friday,

**Room** for the week,  
**Breakfasts:** Mon-Tues, Fri-Saturday

**Double occupancy, all taxes and tips included, = \$1041**

**MIMSLYN INN in Luray:**



Tuesday & Wednesday the 10th & 11th.

The Mimslyn Inn is listed as an Historic Hotel by The National Trust for Historic Preservation and has a restaurant, bar, and front porch overlooking an extensive lawn. Meals will be on your own. As well, there are multiple eating choices within a 10 minute walk.

A range of rooms has been blocked for the Steam Car Tour. The room prices, shown without taxes, are below:

Full bed, historic	3 rooms	\$155/night
Queen bed, historic	22 rooms	\$165/night
King bed, historic	2 rooms	\$175/night
King bed, ADHA compliant	1 room	\$175/night
Double-Double, pair of beds	2 rooms	\$199/night



## PRE-REGISTRATION

We have 32 rooms in Syria at Graves Mountain Lodge. If at Graves you are single occupancy, the food portion of the fixed whole price will be adjusted down. If you are traveling with children and want two of them to double up in a bed, the food portion of price will be adjusted up. Graves is giving us their weekday rate even though we are occupying rooms and breaking up their normal and well booked “*you have to stay the whole weekend*” plans. PLEASE don’t try and re-negotiate and say you only want the room for 4 nights. If you do, it will mess up the negotiated, very fair rate for all others.

We are limited to 30 rooms in the Mimslyn Inn proper in Luray. The Mimslyn Inn has, on the property, some cute cottages. If we exceed 30 rooms, we will see if two cars could pair up and take one of the cottages. That is, IF STILL AVAILABLE.

For planning, here are costs of the tour:

\$ 1,041	tax & tips included	Graves double occupancy, and 8 meals per person.
\$ 310 - 398,	+ taxes	2 nights @ Mimslyn and no meals.
\$ ??????	on your own	2 breakfasts & dinners, in Luray.
\$ ??????	on your own	5 lunches on the road Monday-Friday.
\$ 35 for adults,	\$ 20 for children	Tickets to Montpelier, Monday.
\$ 29 for 62 & older,	\$ 32 for regular admissions	Single ticket for all: Luray Caverns, Car Museum & Frontier Village.
\$ 150 per car		Tour fee: maps, tour book, banners, name tags, and other sundry expenses.
\$ 25		Extra tour book.
\$ ??		If T-shirt or other “event item”,
\$ ??		If we have a square dance.



# PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

(Old fashioned, US Mail please)

On receipt of this form & deposit, logged in by stamp cancellation date, you will be emailed booking info for your lodging. \$100 is refundable should you decide NOT to attend and notify the Tour Director, Alex Joyce, before February 8th, 2022.

Graves Mountain Lodge and The Mimslyn Inn have been visited and checked out and rates negotiated. Alex Joyce lived in Madison County for 11 years, organized three 2-week progressive tours in this area and has been on a National 1 & 2-Cylinder Tour in this area, but, he has not yet run all the routes as a contiguous whole. Registration is being opened now to allow all to better plan the 2022 touring season and secure the accommodations needed. As such, understand that planning such a tour so far in advance may result in some modest and reasonable cost and route re-estimations and understand that the current estimate of \$150 is based on past tour fees.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do intend to bring a steamer to the 2022 Eastern Steam Car Tour, scheduled for Sunday, May 8 through the night of Friday, May 13, 2022, and signify such with this deposit of \$150.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

I will need **1** or **2** rooms, please circle.

**Mailing address, primary:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Email address to be contacted through:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred phone number (land + cell):** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please circle)

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Please make out check in the amount of \$150 and mail, with this completed form to:

Alex Joyce:  
Tour Director 2022 Steam Car Tour,  
PO Box 50336,  
Nashville, TN 37205