



**1959 Classic 2000
Minis United**

The combination of twisty roads, colourful leaves, and nothing else but Classic Minis, made this North American Mini heaven. Photo: Alan Rigby

“.....more driving and less sitting around...”

Mini 51: Autumn in the Appalachians

Words and photos: Mike Guido

As a follow up to the 2009 landmark Mini 50: Party in the Smokies, Classic Minis United surpassed themselves with their Mini 51 event (October 13-16, 2010).

The three-day USA get-together hosted spirited morning and afternoon cruises each day on some of Tennessee and North Carolina's best scenic mountain roads. With CMU being a Classic Mini only club, everyone witnessed the truly unforgettable sight of the endless line of Classic Minis twisting through the mountain curves. It was so spectacular, many of the Minis would go to the back of the line-up just to see and enjoy it. If timing is everything then this event hit it spot on. Everyone enjoyed cool temperatures and witnessed the two peak days of the autumn leaves changing colours.

After a bit of a drizzle on the first morning, it was clear blue skies for the rest of the event. The final day added a bit of a twist to a Mini event with an optional half day of white water rafting. CMU members braved the cold waters, adorning tight rubber suits, helmets, and life vests to sit in a raft and bounce off big rocks. Good fun which made a nice change from the norm!

As with each CMU event, a campground was the base for other activities and gatherings, but there is always a comfy hotel option

close by. The heavily-wooded, riverside campground came complete with the historic sound of trains echoing through the forest. This set the stage for the main evening event featuring a barbecue dinner, traditional bluegrass band, along with some warmth, smores (traditional campfire treat of marshmallow and chocolate sandwiched between sweet crackers) and Mini stories around the campfire pit.

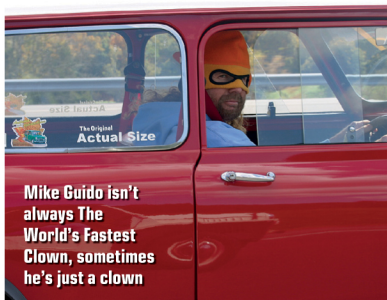
Classic Minis United's style of more driving and less sitting around is starting to influence other US Mini events. After all, if you want to sit, where better than in a Classic Mini navigating the next turn. See the club's website for more pics at www.classicminis.org.



Reverend Jeff Nist's Mini Rat



Wet leaves covered the roads, and the Minis in the mornings



Mike Guido isn't always The World's Fastest Clown, sometimes he's just a clown



Cruise Master Chuck Gaines celebrates after another perfect day



Sara "in control" with Gail, Rhonnie, Rob and Mark