

Murphys and the Ironstone Concours d'Elegance

The Murphys Tour was nothing short of spectacular. Ironstone Vineyard is in the Sierra Foothills very near Murphys. It is a little bit of a hike for the old cars in today's freeway traffic, but it is surviveable and certainly worth the trouble.

We hung with the Linden A's most of the weekend. Tom and Terry Machado have been encouraging our club to come to Ironstone for several years. Tom and Terry were the real tour leaders of this trip. They provided all of the registration information, suggested the best places to stay, hosted a party in their motel room, and reserved a spot for our cars and provided a canopy to protect us from the sun. Many thanks to Tom and Terry.

Ironstone Vineyard is more than a winery, it is an event center. It hosts a gourmet deli, a museum, jewelry shop, wine caverns, a culinary center and gardens. The focal point of Ironstone's Heritage Museum is the Forty-four pound nugget of gold discovered on Christmas Day, in 1992.

The Concours is staged in the amphitheater and lakeside park on terraced grassy slopes. This year the exhibit included four hundred cars ranging from the rare, one of a kind car, to the common but elegant, proud and reliable Model A Ford. Our Fords held their ground against others of the same vintage. "Connoisseurs of fine automobiles consider the model years of 1928 to 1931 to have been the golden age of the coach built luxury motor car. In no other period and in no other product of human endeavor, has that extraordinary combination of art, engineering and craftsmanship been realized to such perfection." I don't think the writer of these words was talking about our Fords, but cars that fit this description were at the Ironstone Concours along with the common, the unique, and the rare.

We stopped three times on the way to Murphys. The first stop was in Escalon to view a magnificent collection of Lincolns. We stopped again at Knights Ferry for a picnic lunch and to visit the longest covered bridge west of the Mississippi. Our final stop was Columbia State Historic Park for ice cream. We would stop here again on the way home for a stagecoach ride and breakfast with the Linden A's at Mr. Whiskers Cafe.

On Saturday night we had a group dinner at the old Murphy's Hotel. Old timers in the Club will recall that previous Club trips to Murphy's have had their share of mishaps including falls down the Hotel stairs and fist fights in the bar — this year was no exception. Trips to Murphys are always an adventure.

Bottom line, we saw some great cars, spent time with wonderful friends, and saw a lot of historic places and had more fun than a barrel of monkeys on uppers.

The Murphys/Ironstone event is definitely on our list for next year.

Article and Photos by **Barry Kinney**





Antique Autos in History Park (Kelley Park) San Jose

Kelley Park, for those who did not attend the tour, is in San Jose off Old Monterey Highway just south of the Spartan Stadium. Kelley Park features twenty historic reconstructed and restored buildings including a Bank of America Building, an Associated Gas Station and a hotel. All of the buildings and many old homes of historic interest are located around a tree-lined central park. Some of the buildings house museums and two or three of the buildings are open with docents to discuss the history of Santa Clara Valley. A vintage trolley provides transportation around town.

Old Car Day at Kelley Park is an annual event hosted by the Santa Clara Valley Model T Ford Club and is open to all vehicles made prior to 1945. Our old cars fit the picture. Kelley Park looked and felt like small town America in the decades prior to the Second World War.

We visited the fruit packing shed, bought ice cream at the hotel, watched the black smith pound hot iron, enjoyed the arts and crafts show and generally had a very enjoyable and relaxing day.

The park was filled with vehicles, many built before 1920. Some were little more than motorized buggies. At least fifteen Model T-Fords of all kinds and styles were on display. At the other end of the spectrum, there were some striking examples of the Salon car of the twenties and thirties. Packard, Pierce-Arrow, Franklin, and Cadillac were well represented.

Our group included a 35 Ford Sedan, a 32 Ford Phaeton, a Model A Ford Coupe, and a Model A Ford Phaeton owned respectively by Barry Kinney, Mike Cunneen, Bob and Pauline Marquez, and Greg and Casey Martinez.

The show also included two beautifully restored wooden motor boats, an exhibit from the Air Museum in Gilroy, and many antique gas powered motors and pumps.

The Park is free to the public. It is open daily except Monday. A self-guided tour is available through the print shop, O'Brien's Cafe (grab an ice cream), the museum store, the Empire Fire House (site of the arts and crafts exhibit), and the Blacksmith Shed.

This is one of those wonderfully relaxing events, great for kids of all ages. This is a place we might want to visit again next year?

Article by **Barry Kinney**

Photos by **Darryl Coe** of *El Camino A's*



