

The Hugely Successful JOC-LA San Bernardino Wilderness Mini-Tour!

Although billed in the diminutive by organizers Don and Pat Rankin, this turned out to be a major feature of our fall event program. Their planning was exceptional and we had a great turnout. We had so many sign-ups *before the Tales even hit the mailboxes* that we decided to cancel our planned week-in-advance email reminder. There were perhaps 18-20 Jags on the tour, with two or three more meeting the group later at the Kimberly Crest House (<http://www.kimberlycrest.org/>) . In all, 39 members were at the luncheon at Napoli.

Judy and I headed out the 91 at 8AM and soon noticed Steve Kirby in his red XK-140 a short distance ahead. We traded positions with Steve a few times, and arrived at the meet-up point in east San Bernardino around 9. We found nearly a dozen Jags already there, with their masters chatting about the day ahead. In spite of predicted winds the air was warm and practically still, a fine day for our drive.

The entourage soon set off eastward and upwards into the foothills of east San Bernardino, headed towards Oak Glen. Along the way we crossed the mighty Santa Ana River on a an old steel bridge that if not on an historic list should be, or perhaps on a more infamous bridge list often mentioned in connection with our crumbling infrastructure! It did last long enough for all of us to get across. At Oak Glen we stopped for refreshments and provisions at the even older (112 years!) Snow-line Orchard, <http://www.snow-line.com>. We drank marvelous juices and tasted samples of 12 different apple varieties, then loaded enough bags and bottles of the truly best stuff on earth into our boots to last through the winter ahead.

The drive south from Oak Glen followed the rapidly dropping, winding Oak Glen Rd to Cherry Valley. This road must have been made for Jaguars. For much of the drive Judy and I were in the middle of the pack of 20 Jags but could seldom see more than the one I was trying to keep up with and the one I was trying to diminish in the rear view mirror. Once down the hill, we were briefly on the I-10 then headed south and west through Live Oak Canyon and into Redlands from the east. This is the hilly part of Redlands through which Don & Pat had planned a scenic drive to an outlook point on the way to Kimberly Crest House. A directionally challenged subgroup (names intentionally omitted) followed a somewhat different scenic route. Although at a dirt lot rather than a scenic outlook, we finally stopped to figure out where we were relative to Kimberly Crest. The guys looked up at the sun, pointed to (perhaps) true north, poked at their smart phones, and argued for a while but no consensus could be reached. Fortunately, another member volunteered to lead us out of the wilderness using superior technology with which her '05 XK8 convertible was apparently fitted. I don't know if JCNA has a Rule Book for tours but if it does technology like this is almost certainly banned, so I don't want to go any further with this. It did work, though, and we were soon once again following Don towards our destination.

I think I've used about all the column inches Bill has set aside for this article, if not your patience, so I won't go into details on the Kimberly Crest House or Napoli restaurant. Both were wonderful experiences worthy of return visits.

I'll close by thanking Don and Pat Rankin for their fine work. It's really great when members take the time to share their favorite roads and places with the Club.

Ed Sowell