

July Memorial Tour: Mormon Trail/Placerville Area

July's event was a lovely tour of the back roads between Carson City and Placerville, including a picnic stop. We had a fine turnout of 12 cars, and we all tied on a pink ribbon in memory of the members lost to cancer over the years: Renee Bartley, Lynette deRuelle, Erin Conly, and Murial Phelps.

We all pulled out of Carson around 9:30 am and headed out through Jack's Valley, then Mormon Trail out to Highway 88 and over the passes through to Gold Bug Mine in Placerville. I'm not quite sure of all the roads, as I was too busy appreciating the lovely scenery and being really, really happy I was seated in a motorized vehicle. This particular Saturday was the day of the infamous Markleeville Death Ride, a bicycle run of 129 miles, and 5 mountain passes for a total of 15,000 feet of vertical climbing. Sounds like tons of fun, huh?

The weather was perfect, till we got down to Placerville, then it was hot, hot, HOT! The picnic stop at Gold Bug Mine was a perfect place, plenty of tables in a nice covered shelter out of the sun.

The members then split up; some visiting friends and family in the area, others deciding to make a bonsai run down Highway 50 and home directly. Some of us made the rest of the tour, which was the best part of the day as far as I'm concerned. We took a small road out of Kyburz, which ran over the hills a number of miles back to Highway 88. It was beautiful, twisty, turny, untravelled, with gorgeous scenery! A short halt at one of the tributaries to the American River for a little wading and splashing around to cool off was just what the day needed.

Finished the day right smack dab in the middle of the final leg of the Death Ride, those riders on the uphill side REALLY didn't appear to be enjoying themselves, but the guys going downhill seemed to appreciate the ride. Except for the one who fell off his bike at about 40 mph, and did himself some damage. We had an unscheduled 20-minute halt as traffic waited for the police and ambulance to arrive. The biker was sitting up on the asphalt when we went by, but I'm sure had some serious road rash.

Back to Carson City via Mormon Trail. An excellent day on some terrific roads; many thanks to Bryan and Suzie McCurdy for a wonderful tour!