

---

# Side Mount

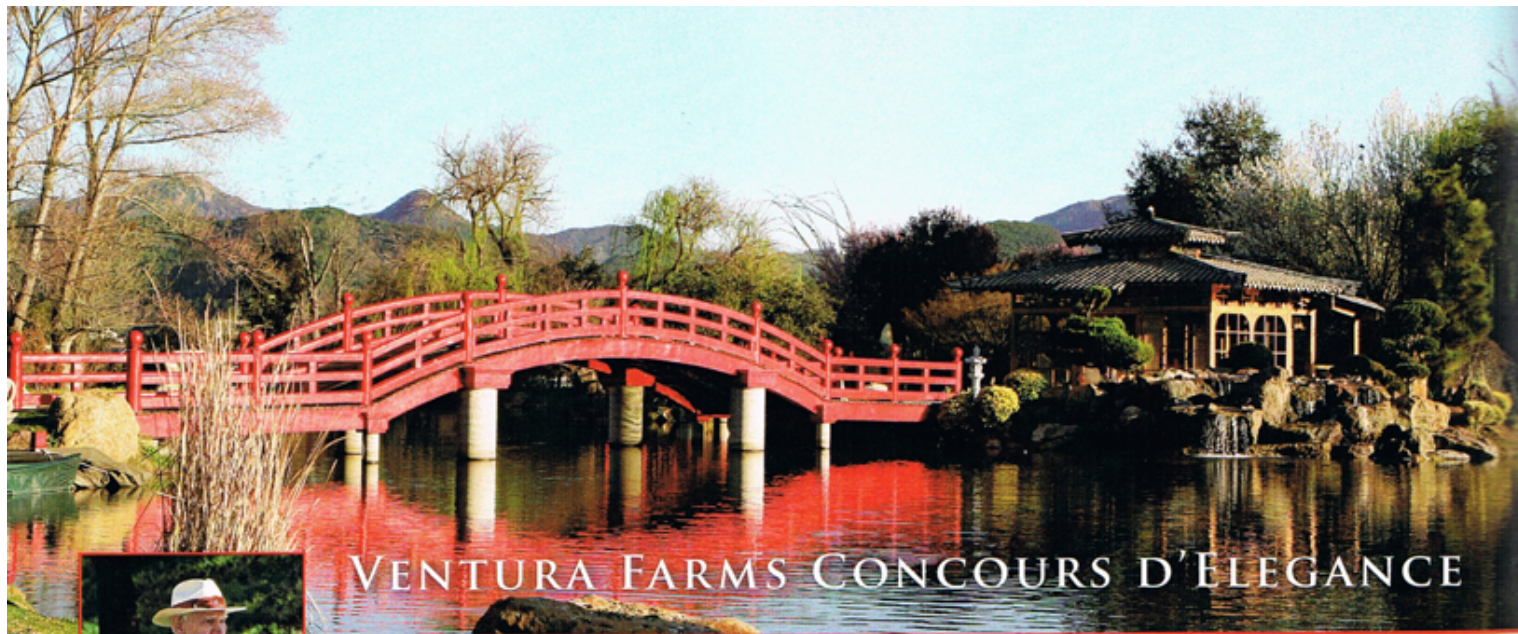


# Mirror

---







## VENTURA FARMS CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE



By Gene O'Hara  
As told to Michelle Cousineau

The idea for the inaugural Ventura Farms Concours d'Elegance came into existence sometime in January of 2013. David H. Murdock, the Chairman and CEO of Dole and Castle and Cooke, gave the

approval to proceed with the event - he would host it at his 2,200 acre private estate at Lake Sherwood - and the condition was, it would take place on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2013. Yes, that's right, not 2014...2013. I have known the event organizers for a long time, Kameron Nesen and Nick Lemieux, they are very good friends of mine. They approached me to help them from the very beginning, and I said, "Of course!" Kameron comes from a car family, and Nick is a car hobbyist whose taste has always leaned towards very fine cars. We all envisioned a magnificent concours.

The event date, though, sounded impossible. I know the planning that goes into concours events: there are judging committees to be formed, cars to procure, awards to create -- and, last but not least, preparation of the cars for display by the owners. As the days passed, though, it became apparent that *everyone* wanted this event to take place in March of this year. My recommendation was this: the only way this can take place at all on short notice is to make it a non-judged concours. We'll invite the *best* owners with the *best* cars and get them here just to have a lovely afternoon with each other, and show their cars without any pressure, any stress about being judged or winning trophies. Actually, *everyone* will receive a trophy....So, I



started making phone calls. I told everybody...we want to see these cars, we want to see *you* with them. It will be nice for the public to be able to see them and mingle with you, we are not concerned about having the cars absolutely concours *perfect*, as is usually the case with an event like this.

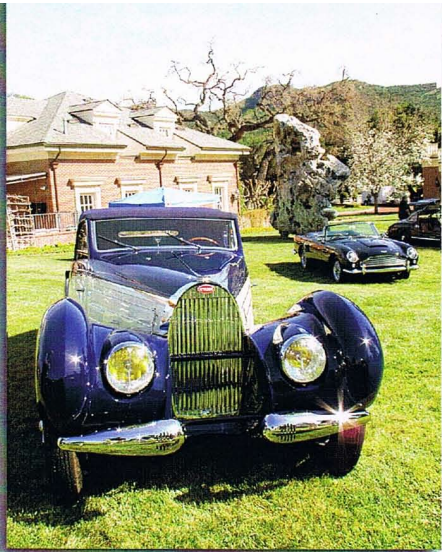
Everybody had a wonderful time. It's certainly one of the greatest venues ever, and the quality of the people - both the people who paid to walk in and see the cars, and the people who brought the cars - was just amazing. Everyone was respectful of the cars. Though it took place on an expansive estate, it was an intimate event in that there weren't ropes and barriers around the cars, people were allowed to get close to the cars and close to the owners and mingle. Everyone just had a great time. It was so casual, yet it was elegant, it was refined. It was a beautiful thing. The cars were extraordinary, and many were one-off cars.

The event benefited Westlake Village Park and YMCA. We are doing it again in 2014, and we will have more cars next year. At some point, though, we will come to the saturation point, where we won't want it to get any bigger. I know that goes counter to what most people want. They want bigger, faster.... We're striving for unique, excellent, elegant...a tribute to the automotive fine art world. I just think we are going to keep getting better and better at it. 🚗



**This page, clockwise from top:** Visitors enjoyed the estate's gardens, lake and architectural beauty; Jim Hull's 1947 Delahaye 135MS; Tony Vincent's 1937 Mercedes-Benz 540K Sport Cabriolet and other Classics line the "Grand Allee of Thai Sculptural Boulders"; Host David H. Murdock addresses the crowd. **Opposite page, clockwise from top left:** Tony Vincent's 1934 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Continental Streamline Saloon, Park Ward; Merle and Peter Mullin's 1939 Bugatti Type 57C Aravis; Tim McGrane, Executive Director of Blackhawk Automotive Museum, brought two automobiles from the collection: a 1937 Rolls-Royce Phantom III Vesters & Neirinc Coupe, and a 1937 Bentley 4-1/4 liter Carlton two-seat open tourer. Below: late afternoon sun sets on the gardens surrounding the lake.









Row 1: 1937 Packard 12 Coupe Roadster, owned by Gary Severns; a prominent display of Classics, in the foreground, John Milliken's 1941 Cadillac Convertible Sedan.



Row 2: 1947 Cadillac 62 Convertible Coupe, owned by Larry Symons; St. Patrick's Day spirit - Gene O'Hara (far right) and friends.

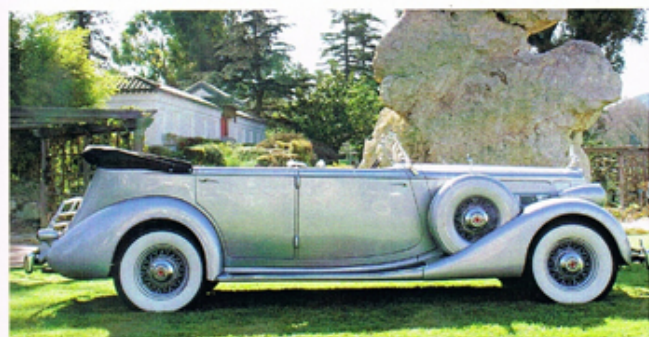
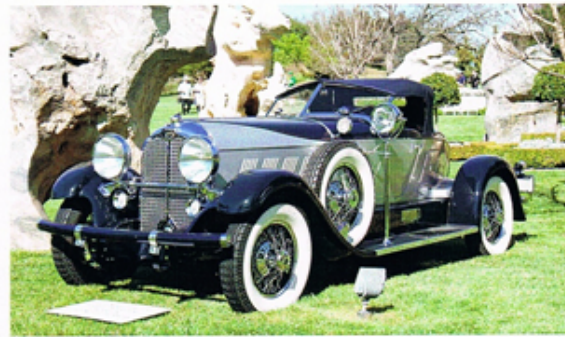


Row 3: Bruce Meyer pictured here with Tom Kenney. Bruce brought his (nc)1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing to the event; Tanya Vincent visits the Conservatory, where thousands of orchids bloom.



Martin Cousineau (left) visits with Dan Murphy (center) and friend; Danny Howard's 1930 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Brewster Trouville Town Car; Concours chairman Nick Lemieux visits with Tony Zehenni, Jr.





Row 1: Detail of "Poet's House" (center) flanked by Automobile Driving Museum cars, 1930 Stutz Monte Carlo, Weymann (left) and 1932 Plymouth Brewster Town Car (right). Row 2: Jan and Larry Symons; Aaron and Valerie Weiss brought their 1931 Marmon 16 LeBaron Convertible Sedan (left) and 1929 Auburn 8-120 Boattail Speedster (right). Row 3: The Automobile Driving Museum's 1936 Packard 8 Touring Phaeton; Gene O'Hara brought the 1936 Rolls-Royce Phantom III Hooper & Co. Saloon, owned by the Carroll O'Connor Estate. Row 4: Fred Lax's 1930 Cadillac 452A V16 Roadster; Michelle and Martin Cousineau's 1938 Packard 12 Brunn All-Weather Cabriolet