The Squeeky Bow



Fifth Saturday Jam August 31, 2024





A Fifth Saturday Jam was held at Jeanne and Charlie's house on the last day of August 2024. Fifteen pickers and 1 grinner gathered to play old favorites, revive some songs that had been out to pasture, and worked on some new songs. A few players presented solo pieces, and we talked about prepping for next spring's fiddle contest. After almost two hours of music, we lunched and visited, and a good time was had by all. Everyone agreed we should continue these informal gatherings—even without waiting for a fifth Saturday. Suggestions are welcome.







NOFA has again been invited to play music for Pioneer Day at Spring Mountain Ranch State Park

...this year celebrating the 50th anniversary as a park.

The Krupp Diamond

Saturday, October 5, 2024

Participants will gather in the lower parking lot at **9:30** to be transported to the Ranger Station. We will set up, but not begin playing until 10:30, then play until noon, when a bluegrass band continues the music.

Here's a brief history of the Ranch/Park

For thousands of years the springs at Red Rock were a water source for the Mojaves and Paiutes. The Spanish came in 1829, creating the Old Spanish Trail from Santa Fe, NM to Los Angeles, CA. When Mormons used this route in 1847 as they made their pilgrimage to Salt Lake City, it was known as the Mormon Road. For a time in the 1860s, Bill Williams, a trapper and an outlaw, squatted on the property. The first legal owners were James Wilson & George Anderson in 1876, who named it the *Sand Stone Ranch*. Fifty years later, Wilson sold out to George Willard, a furrier who raised chinchillas. Willard leased the ranch to Chester Lauck, the "Lum" on the *Lum & Abner Show*, and he built the beautiful house you see today, made of sandstone and redwood, and he renamed the property the *Bar Nothing Panch*.

The most interesting owner was Vera Krupp, who bought the ranch from Lauck in 1955. An actress and a film star, Vera was married & divorced four times—to a baron, a movie director, a physician, and last to Alfred Krupp. He was a Nazi war criminal who used prisoners from concentration camps to manufacture weapons, making a fortune. After 12 years in prison, Krupp was released and his \$45 million fortune restored to him. He came to America and married Vera, giving her a 33.19 carat Asscher-cut diamond ring. They divorced two years later in 1957, but she kept the ring. Vera loved the ranch and operated it as a working cattle ranch, raising Herefords and Brahma bulls branded with the *Diamond V*, changing the name to the *Spring Mountain Ranch*. Vera often wore her diamond ring, especially when she went to Las Vegas, but even when riding horseback tending her cattle. In 1959, thieves broke into her home, tied her up, and forcibly ripped the ring from her finger. A few months later the diamond was recovered, but Vera's sense of security was shaken. She had a secret room built off her bedroom, accessed through a door in her closet, via a hidden passageway. The Sheriff deputized Vera, giving her a badge with her name on it, and permitting her to carry a gun. In 1967, her health failing, Krupp sold the ranch to Howard Hughes for \$625,000. After Vera's death, Richard Burton bought the diamond ring for Elizabeth Taylor paying \$307,000. Following Taylor death, the diamond was purchased by a South Korean conglomerate for \$8.8 million.

Howard Hughes did nothing with the ranch and sold it in 1972 to Fletcher Jones and William Murphy for \$1.5 million. Their plan was to develop an exclusive, wealthy community, for 2,000 people. But there was stiff opposition to the plan and public outcry curtailed the development. The Bureau of Land Management stepped in, and with the State of Nevada, purchased the property and in 1974 created Spring Mountain Ranch State Park. I hope you have a chance to visit, the house, walk into the secret room, see Vera's costumes, her deputy badge, and items "branded" with the *Diamond V*. Enjoy!