

The Tebo Collection

By Greg Bruny

California has many fine car collections, including Jay Leno's Garage. But here in Northern Colorado, we have another outstanding and significant collection, known as the Tebo Garage, located in Longmont, Colorado. This collection was started in 1975 by entrepreneur Stephen Tebo and currently contains almost 400 vehicles, including some rare and unique ones.

The Tebo Garage is a private collection generally not open to the public. However, several times a year, area car clubs are invited to view it. Twenty-five VMCCA Northern Colorado members took advantage of that opportunity on May 24. There were probably a dozen or so different clubs in attendance, with a couple hundred visitors in total. After some welcoming remarks by the owner and support staff, we were allowed to wander and experience the effort and investment that has gone into the collection. Stephen Tebo also volunteers his facility as a space for high-end fundraisers for local non-profits.

Interestingly, the vehicles are not immobile displays. Instead, all automobiles are started and lightly driven at least every 90 days to help keep them operating and functioning properly, which also requires time and effort by the support staff. All the vehicles appear in top-notch condition, and most were likely purchased that way. There did not appear to be any central restoration area on site, rather just areas for vehicle maintenance. While there are several more common vehicles in the collection, there are certainly a number with celebrity connections, such as John Lennon's white Rolls-Royce, John F. Kennedy's white Cadillac hearse, as well as vehicles owned by Frank



Two of the many special pieces of memorabilia at the Tebo Collection.





Above: During 1952-55, Willys manufactured the last of its passenger car models, the Aero. This Willys Aero is in pristine condition. Below: The variety and selection of Tebo's antique car collection is staggering.

Sinatra, Burt Reynolds, Blake Shelton, the Smothers Brothers, Steve McQueen, and Ricky Nelson.

Additionally, there were some specific-purpose vehicles, such as a fruit dealer truck; a nicely outfitted Coca-Cola truck, fully loaded with bottles from back when Coke was \$1 a case; and a well-outfitted Bell Systems phone repair truck. Also, there was a large room of emergency vehicles, including an early fire truck for Canon City, Colorado. On the smaller side, there was a Morris Minor fire truck. I don't know whether or not it was used for firefighting.

There was a room of motorcycles and one for smaller vehicles, but only one early Japanese vehicle in the mix, which I noticed anyway. In addition to the aforementioned John Lennon Rolls-Royce, there was a room dedicated to British cars. There were also rooms filled with Mustangs and Thunderbirds. Cars not in dedicated rooms were displayed in the large showroom, generally arranged by make. A couple of unique vehicles were an Edsel Ranchero and a Pontiac El Camino.



We certainly appreciated the invitation to visit Tebo's Garage. The group found that it was a unique opportunity to view some special vehicles.

(Photos by Greg Bruny)

