

## Martin and Irline Van Ardenne



Today is April 20th and a gorgeous spring day. It happens also to be the club annual spring tune-up to ready our cars for a safe and fun season of driving in our beautiful Model A Fords. While we were all together I thought I would take the opportunity to interview another one of our newer members, and outline their lives to allow all of our members to get to know them better. Little did I know at the time I began the interview the impact this opportunity would have on me as a club member.

I sat down during the tune-up after lunch and started going through my questions when suddenly I realized through the eyes of a new member just how proud I am to say I am a member of the DIABLO A'S. (*more on that later*).

My interview was with Martin and Irline Van Ardenne. They are members of only six months but have fit in like part of the family. Irline was born in Sweden and moved to the U.S. when she was just six years old. She told me the move had a lot to do with the cold weather in Sweden and the moderate temperatures of San Diego CA. When she arrived Irline spoke no English, so the move was a whole new learning experience. Irline attended school in San Diego and then attended UC San Diego where she attained a degree in Mechanical engineering. She continues to use those skills by being a "technical recruiter" doing things I do not fully understand but in future talks I will learn more of her job talents. This is a great job because she is able to do it from home.

As it turns out at the age of fourteen Martin immigrated to the US from the Netherlands. Martin's family moved to the bay area where he attended school. Martin also had to learn English. Martin also is a UC Grad getting his degree in mathematics from UC Berkeley. Martin's business still ties to his Europe. He works for a Swedish investment fund dealing in commercial real estate.

Irline has an older sister and about the time Irline graduated from San Diego, her sister needed a bone marrow transplant that was done at Stanford Medical Center. Irline helped her through this ordeal and she is happy to say her sister is living a normal life and doing well. While in Northern CA Irline was invited to a social gathering in San Francisco where she met Martin. As they say the rest is history. They married and are raising three children; two teenage girls and a pre-teen boy. Working at home sure helps in keeping them on the right track. On October 2, the Van Ardenne's will celebrate their 20th anniversary.

CONGRATULATIONS! They have lived in Moraga for the last eight years.

I asked about other hobbies and found that one of Irline's passions is ice dancing. She tells me this can be both a single event or with a partner. She enjoyed skating as a kid, and after a 30-year break got back on the ice. It's a new experience as an adult! As for Martin, he said in school he played on the tennis team and was in the math club..... Well that fits. However it seems with further digging I found he had a passion for things that move on wheels. He told me he would frequent automobile events like the Concorso Italiano in Monterey and marvel at the beauty of all those old cars. Martin told me he also owns a 1963 Maserati and a 1967 Datsun Fairlady, both of which are being restored. Now I have been around car names, models, and manufacturers all my life and a 1967 Datsun Fairlady is a new one for me. Perhaps you may be familiar with that car. If so, talk to Martin about that. Irline also is somewhat of a motor-head. Ask her about her love affair with her motorcycle over thirty years ago.

Our conversation turned to how a Model A got into their life. Martin said he was talking old cars to an acquaintance that happened to own a Model A and one thing led to another. Soon they both began their search to find an "A" they could drive and enjoy. They were told about the Diablo A's, and after meeting Alex Janke, Bob Grady and Doug Freeman became even more enthused about Model A's. Shortly after that I got a phone call from Irline and I told her we were having a lady's learn to drive day the very next day and if she had time she might like to stop by to meet some members and see some cars. The next morning she showed up and I let her drive the roadster. With very little help she became a very fast learner and I said if she joined the club I would give her a "lady's learn to drive badge." They joined the very next meeting, and a month later became the proud owners of a 1930 Model A. As a side note, Irline is thrilled that Martin choose older cars rather than a younger woman as a midlife crisis.

I began this column by saying how proud I was to be a member of the Diablo A's. That was because of what both Martin and Irline had to say about their experience with the Diablo A's. They could not have been more sincere and happy to let me know just how friendly our club is and how we all made them feel like part of the family even from the very first contact when calling Alex. I want to thank each club member for the warmth you have given all our many new members. Keep up the good work. This new job of writing "Headlights" is more fun than I could have ever expected.

Until next time, keep your headlights on.