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November a busy, beautiful month for DSR

I don't remember when so few did so much with so little. Your editor is not entirely sure just how we managed pull it off, but pull it off we did. The AACA Southeastern Divisional Tour hosted by our Region was more than a success. It was a roaring success!

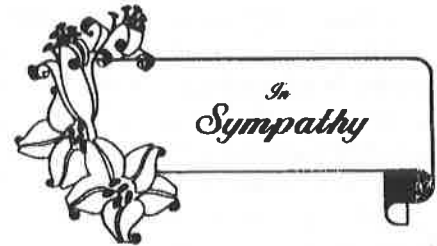
The drivers and passengers of the 90-plus cars complimented the DSR from the time they walked into the opening dinner function until they were leaving on Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning. They couldn't say enough good things about the short days, good routes, hospitality room, meals, points of interest visited and everything else that was included.

DSR members made lots of new friends, renewed acquaintances with old ones and are already looking forward to seeing them again soon. And that's what touring is all about.

Charlie has his own "thank you" elsewhere in this issue but I want to take this opportunity to tell all of you who worked how much it was appreciated. The door prizes were terrific; the handcrafted items were a big hit. Five ladies of the club put together, from scratch, the dinner that fed about 220 people on Wednesday night. I'm sure there's a couple of others who never want to see another red bean. But after their tasks were done, they were out having fun with everyone else. A future issue of *The Antique Automobile* will contain a complete write-up on the tour by Charlie Froehlich.

What a great meal and good time all of you who couldn't be at the annual DSR Thanksgiving dinner missed! The food and fellowship were better than ever and no one left hungry. As a matter of fact, anyone who wanted took home a plate for that night, or most likely, the next day. There were salads, vegetables, meats, desserts, bread and butter and tea or coffee for all to enjoy.

The dining area was decorated to the max with fall leaves, various colored gourds of all different sizes and pumpkins to give it all an autumn flair. Following the blessing by our Chaplain, Lambert Mims, 2 Andersons, 1 Bailey, 1 Crowds, 2 Ebbs, 1 Edwards, 2 Francises, 1 Lowe, 2 Mims, 2 Musgroves, 2 Nettles, 2 Paquets with guest Marien Brent, A. Rowell, R. Sloan with guest David Jarrell, 2 Whighams and A. White. Due to Geneva Cammon being in the hospital, she and B.L. weren't there and Ernie Youen's brother died the previous Thursday so he and Eugenia were out of town. We missed *YOU*, too.



DSR members wish to extend our condolences to Ernie and Eugenia, as well as the entire Youens family on the death of Ernie's brother. The other Mr. Youens lived in Texas and has had an extended illness.

Keeping the pedal to the metal...

The Steering Column

By Leah Musgrove



Whew! What a time we had for the South-eastern Divisional Tour! I would like to thank all the club members for such wonderful participation in working on the many aspects of the tour. There were several years of planning and months of preparation, not to mention the work done during the four days our guests were here. Your enthusiasm made the club really shine for the tourists. As President, I have received numerous kudos from those who came to enjoy our Southern hospitality. It has been a very busy fall season for us and I know you join me in being glad it's behind us.

The holidays are almost here now. We had a grand Thanksgiving dinner at the clubhouse on Saturday, Nov. 17th. Thanks to Buddy and Patt for handling the dinner. I wish there had been a larger turnout, but those of us who did attend enjoyed a peaceful afternoon eating and visiting. After all, that's what we do best! The Christmas party is scheduled for Saturday night, Dec. 8th starting at 6:00 P.M. We will be feasting on Geneva Cammon's famous gumbo and for those who do not care for that, there will be roast pork loin. There will be plenty of side dishes and desserts so come hungry. We will get down with some Dirty Santa and the 2002 officers will be installed.

At the November meeting, we voted to provide the residents of the William Green Veteran's Home in Bay Minette with a car display plus gifts. This is something I feel strongly about and I hope you can find the time to come out and go with us. The display is scheduled for 9:00 AM through 12 Noon on Saturday, December 15th. During that time, we will distribute the gift bags to the men and women and have some fellowship with those who have served our country so that we might enjoy the freedoms we have today.

Please contact me as soon as possible to let me know if you can join us and/or provide help with any aspect of the event. I know it will be a heart-warming experience for everyone involved.

I hope that you had a wonderful and safe Thanksgiving holiday. We do have so much to be thankful for here in our little corner of the world.

Deep South Region Officers 2001



President.....	Leah Musgrove	633-9305
Vice President....	Eddie Anderson	649-3231
Secretary.....	Reecie Mims	479-2523
Treasurer.....	Carl Bailey	947-5262
Activities.....	Joyce Francis	342-3398
	Theresa Vaughan	639-0803
Editor.....	Patt Paquet	661-4009
Mem. at Large.....	Cecil Pugh	342-3404

Appointees, Volunteers & Support Personnel

Chaplain	Lambert Mims	479-2523
SE Divisional Tour	Oct. 31- Nov. 3, 2001	
Chairman	Charlie Froehlich	(601) 749-9935
Proofreader.....	Tracy Henderson	661-2818
Layout	Buddy Paquet	

The Sparkplug is non-profit and published for the information of our members and friends. DEEP SOUTH REGION meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in the clubhouse located at 951 Forest Hill Dr. Membership in the Antique Automobile Club of America is required to be a member of this region. Annual local dues are \$15; AACA National dues are \$26. Views expressed in the Sparkplug are not necessarily those of the Region officers or AACA. Permission to copy is hereby granted provided source is disclosed and credit given to author. Some material maybe copyrighted and permission to use granted to this publication only. Contributions to the Sparkplug are welcome but the Editor reserves the right to edit material that may not be suitable for publication

When you finish reading this newsletter, please share it with a friend who might enjoy knowing more about our hobby.

A matter of record

Minutes

Deep South Region A.A.C.A. Meeting, Oct. 25, 2001

The meeting was called to order by Leah Musgrove, President, with 44 members present. Leah welcomed new members, Walt & Martha Fuller. Lambert Mims, chaplain, gave the invocation.

OLD BUSINESS: *President:* President Leah thanked those who worked on the Hooters Show; and reported that in spite of the rain the show was a success. She updated the group on the beautification program; and thanked Hershel Whigham and Pat Francis for building the concrete pads at both doors.

Charlie Froehlich reported on the S. E. Tour next week. He is still asking for donations for the hospitality room at the hotel. Patt Paquet showed the gift to be given to the National President during the tour. The gift, an original piece made by Bob Vaughan, is made in the shape of a pecan and is called a pee-can. Patt also asked for and received reimbursement for items purchased during the year for the S. E. tour in the amount of \$587.68, on a motion by Mike Ebl and a second by Anna White.

VICE PRESIDENT: Eddie Anderson thanked those who came for the work day and announced another work day for this coming Saturday. *SECRETARY:* The minutes for the last month were approved as printed on a motion from Hershel Whigham and a second from Buddy Paquet.

ACTIVITIES: Joyce Francis asked for a chair for the Christmas party. Theresa Vaughan volunteered.

MEMBER AT LARGE: Cecil Pugh was absent but Don Dillehay reported there were no suggestions for revisions to the by-laws.

NEW BUSINESS: The President read a letter from Lambert Mims, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, stating that he and his committee had been able to fill only three positions for the year 2002. Members were asked to volunteer for the positions for President and Vice President. From the floor, Don Dillehay nominated Ross Sloan as Vice President. He accepted. If no one comes forward to take the President's position, Lambert Mims will conduct the meetings in order to keep the organization going. *TREASURER:* The financial report was approved on a motion by Charlie Froelich and a second by Hershel Whigham. *ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR:* Joyce Francis announced that five convertibles are needed on Nov. 10 for the Springdale Christmas parade. All participants should sign up with Leah. She will send waivers. She reminded us to bring "throws". Also, Joyce is offering Hooters car show T-shirts for \$8.00 each.

Lucille Nettles won the 50/50 pot. (\$23.00)

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Reecie Mims

Old Pontiacs are nice , but...

by Noel Cazayoux

I've always liked Pontiacs. Way back in the 1950's, when you could tell the make, and usually the year and model of a car from a block away, the Pontiacs were one of my favorite cars. Prior to the late '50s Pontiacs all had a wide strip of chrome along the center of their hoods all the way to the windshield. The wide chrome strip continued down the center of the trunk also. Then there was the famous 'Indian Head' hood ornament. If you paid extra, you could have an Indian Head that was illuminated when you turned on the lights. Through the 1954 models they were powered by either an in-line 6 or 8 cylinder engine, both of which were flatheads, which while being durable and quiet, left something to be desired in the excitement department. Both engines had been relatively unchanged since their design in the 1930's.

In 1954, GM came out with all new bodies for Cadillac, Buick and Oldsmobile and they had OHV V-8 engines. Finally, in 1955, both Pontiac and Chevrolet got complete new bodies as well as V-8's. While Ford had gotten its first OHV V-8 in 1954, the '55 engine was bigger and more powerful, and Plymouth had its first V-8.

Prior to the early 1950's, the interior colors of most cars were either gray, tan or brown. The convertible models were sometimes more colorful. With the introduction of the 2-door hardtops in 1949-51, interior colors got more interesting. Color-keyed interior colors were beginning to appear with the advent of the two-door hardtops. But it was in 1955 that some really wild, bright exterior and matching interior colors appeared across the board from all the manufacturers. These new colors were even offered on some 4-door sedans.

The first 1955 Pontiac that I saw was a Starchief 2-door hardtop in green and cream with a matching leather interior. I fell in love with that car, but at age 15 all I could do was admire it. I had a part-time job in a service station during high school and the owner bought a new 2-door hardtop Chieftain, which was the less expensive model. It had a hydramatic "power-pack", which was a 4 bbl. carburetor. He let me drive it to pick up customers on occasion. I remember it would "burn rubber" if you floored it at a dead stop and chirp the tires on

upshifts. I never let him know that I would have worked for nothing just to drive his Pontiac.

Later, I owned a '57 Pontiac Chieftain 2-door hardtop with a stick shift. It was black with a white stripe down the side and matching black and white cloth interior. Except for having to replace the clutch several times, it was a great car. The wide chrome down the center of the hood was gone by '57 as well as the light Indian Head. The engine size had grown considerably as the horsepower race was getting underway. The horsepower race continued for several years with Pontiac winning many races. The Pontiacs became known as fast cars with their racetrack record, "wide-track" and big powerful V-8's.

Later in life - in a feeble attempt to relive my youth - I have owned several cars from the 50s and 60s. I was looking at the pictures of cars for sale in *Old Car Trader* magazine one day and there was a picture of a 1955 Pontiac Starchief for sale. It wasn't a 2-door hardtop, it was a 4-door sedan, but it looked great in the picture. (They always do!) It seems the older I get, the better the 4-door cars look.

The car was in Boca Raton, Florida. I called the owner and he sent me more pictures.

I had a cousin who lives in Fort Lauderdale go and check it out for me. Long story short, the car was a two-owner with very low miles and very original, except for pain. I bought the car sight unseen and had a car hauler go pick it up.

I was not disappointed when the car arrived. While not a restored car, it was a very presentable car and a good driver. It seemed to be a perfect car for touring, being able to cruise the Interstates at 70 without breathing hard. As a bonus, with power steering and brakes, my wife should be able to drive it, too. I later replaced the ancient dealer-installed AC with a modern unit which works fine and looks good in the car. I am not a purist like some old car guys, so in the interest of reliability I had the generator and regulator replaced with a modern GM one-wire alternator. (No more sticking regulator points or watching the ammeter go to maximum discharge while idling with the lights and AC on.)

So far, so good. Then one day I was driving around my neighborhood giving (Cont. Page 5)

The Pontiac story continues...

the old Pontiac some exercise when all of a sudden, it made a "popping" sound – like a backfire – and the car began shaking and losing power. I pulled to the side of the road, opened the hood and listened to the engine. It sounded like it was backfiring through the carburetor. My first thought was that it had jumped timing. I nursed the car home and the timing checked okay. After talking to a couple of mechanic friends, they both thought a push rod had come off an exhaust valve, whereby when that cylinder fired, the combustion had no place to go but back up through the intake valve when it opened and thus the backfire through the carb. It turned out they were almost right. After pulling plug wires, one by one, when I pulled the #5 wire, the backfiring stopped. I then re-moved the rocker arm cover from that side and was very surprised at what I found. A hollow stud which feeds oil to the rocker, as well as holding the rocker in place, had broken off. I won't go into details, but I was able to remove the broken stud without removing the head. That's when my real problem began. I subscribe to an antique Pontiac magazine, but after contacting several parts places, no one had a stud or new where I might find one. After visiting many local machine shops, I got lucky. A fellow at one place went back into his parts bin and came out with a stud that looked identical, except it was solid and had no oil passage. He looked at the two broken pieces I had brought him and said he could probably make the one he had work, which was for a small-block Chevy. I told him to go ahead. While I waited at the counter, he went to the back of the shop. I could see him at a couple of different machines. In about 15 minutes he came back to the counter and dropped his creation in front of me. I looked at it carefully...identical to the old one, only not in two pieces. I thanked him and asked what I owed him. "\$10.00", he said. I could hardly believe it; I would have paid \$100 for that part with no complaint. He even told me how to install it. He told me to put the stud in the freezer overnight (the low temperature causes it to shrink), then apply Locktight and tap it into the head, even with the other studs. Everything came out fine. I've put about 800 miles on the car since then. It runs as good as ever.

I recently heard a story of a fellow club member who had what sounded like an identical problem with his Pontiac while on his way to join a

tour. Unfortunately, it happened hundreds of miles from his home and he had to leave the car with a shop for repairs and rent a modern car to make the tour. (The shop was able to fix the car and he drove it home after the tour was over.)

Since getting into this hobby, I have owned a couple of Chevys and Fords, a Buick, a Mercury and now the Pontiac. I've had little trouble finding parts for all except the Pontiac. I have heard that locating parts for older Oldsmobiles can sometimes be difficult, also. I'm sure this is true of many other makes and models as well. Generally, it seems the few of the cars produced and the older the car, the more difficult finding parts becomes. It's funny, but I never even gave a thought to this when I was considering buying the Pontiac.

Unlike today's cars, with design and production cost control becoming a very high priority, most manufactures use basically the same engines, transmissions, etc. Also the designs of these mechanical components don't change that much from year to year. Therefore, parts interchange today is probably much better than in the 50s or 60s. In any case, if you are willing to pay a little more and look a little harder and sometimes improvise, don't let possible parts problems stop you from owning that certain old car you really want. As a reward, you'll be driving something different – something you really like. At the car shows, if that's your thing, the next ten cars along side yours won't be a duplicate of the one you're showing. You'll also hear a lot of "Gee, I can't remember when I last saw one of these!" And, "Wow! Now that was really a great car."

As far me, I love the old Pontiac and have found that some other GM parts do fit and work fine. We will tour in it and I hope another of those rocker studs doesn't break when we're far from home. But I not going to lose sleep worrying over something that may never happen again. In any case, if I get 'chicken' we can take the '66 Ford Falcon which I can find parts for nearly anywhere. But then I remember someone telling me once that "Fords hardly ever leave you on the side of the road." I wonder who that was??? I bet there are a lot of you who know him!!

Ed. Note: If you were on the tour and saw the aqua and cream Pontiac, you can really relate to this story. Noel and Gail are avid tourists and rarely hesitate to take the Pontiac anywhere.

Welcome to new DSR members

It is a pleasure to have Walter (Walt) and Martha Fuller as our newest members. They joined at the September meeting and jumped right into being active members.

Martha contributed six jars of her tasty preserves to go in door prize baskets for the tour and Walt was assisting with parking on Thursday at Leroy Hill Coffee Company.

There are a couple of fine pictures of their cars taken at Henderson's farm that will go up on the "Tour Board" in the clubhouse. They have a 1929 Ford Fordor Standard and a 1929 Ford Roadster which was seen at a few places on the AACA tour.

We hope they will enjoy being members and be sure to introduce yourself to them at the first opportunity.

Thanksgiving Feast

Norton drove up to the country to visit his cousin, a farmer. As he pulled into the driveway, he was stunned to see a pig with what appeared to be a wooden leg. When his cousin came out to greet him, he asked his cousin "Does that pig really have a wooden leg?"

"Let me explain," said his cousin. "That's Ed. He's probably the smartest pig in the whole county. Three years ago, he surprised us all by publishing a small book of poems. And for the past few months, he's been writing a financial column for our local paper."

"That's hard to believe," said Norton.

"Wait, there's more," says his farmer cousin. "Why, just two weeks ago, my little granddaughter was playing out in the old barn when the building caught fire. Old Ed broke out of his pen, ran into the barn and dragged her out. He actually saved her life."

"That's fantastic," said Norton, "but I still don't understand. How did Ed end up with a wooden leg?"

His cousin laughed and said, "Well, you don't eat a pig like that all at once."

A big "Thank You" from Charlie F.

Yes, I owe a big thank you to DSR members for all of the work done on the AACA Southeastern Divisional Tour. I think the tour was successful and we received many lots of good comments. Many of the tourists commented on how helpful and friendly the DSR members were and it is always good to hear that.

I do not wish to name names as I would undoubtedly forget someone, so just allow me to thank everyone one for door prizes, goody bag items, food for the opening function, the club house lunch, the hospitality room, the closing at "The Farm" and the coffee stops. The trouble trailer, trophies and awards, parking help, ticket taking, registration help, photography, the labor to set up for the opening dinner function and clean up afterwards, the drink wagon and whatever else I may have forgotten or perhaps didn't even know about.

Tillmans Corner Christmas Parade

It's that time of year again so get your flivver out and put some Christmas decorations on it. We are invited to participate again this year and have been told the antique cars will be at the *front* of the parade. It doesn't matter if your car is convertible or not, we want you to be involved. Line-up will be at Griggs School, corner of Three Notch and Carol Plantation Roads (across from Mobile Memorial Gardens Mortuary) on Saturday, December 1st at 8:30 A.M. (Yes, I know, all we do is stand around but at least we get the chance to visit and kick tires.) The parade is scheduled to roll at 10:00 A.M. I don't have information yet on whether we will be furnished throws but when I call to remind you of the event, I will let you know. Please be prepared to tell me you will be there and that you will be coming to the Paquet's house for lunch afterwards. Food and beverages will be ready as soon as the parade is over. Weather permitting, we will be eating outdoors.

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Deep South Region's 2001 Christmas Party Reservation Form

The DSR Christmas party will be held in the clubhouse December 8, 2001 starting at 5:30 P.M. with coffee and fellowship. The meal entrees will include Geneva Cammon's world renown gumbo and for those who cannot eat seafood, there will be roast pork loin. There will be multiple choices of sides dishes to accompany both plus desserts to soothe your sweet tooth. Beside all of the above, there is no cost! It is free to all DSR members.

The gift exchange will be via "Dirty Santa". If you are of the male gender, please bring a man's gift and if you are of the kinder, gentler sex, then bring a woman's gift. Gifts may be anything that you would like to receive, but *please, no gag gifts.*

Please return this form to **Theresa Vaughan ~ 1480 Brockton Lane East ~ Mobile, AL 36695-4362** no later than **Wednesday, December 5, 2001.** If you are **not coming**, please call to let her know (639-0803) so she won't have to call you to ask.

Deep South Region
Antique Automobile Club of America
4963 Freeway Lane
Mobile, AL 36619-1716

Important Dates 2001

- Dec. 1** Tillmans Corner Christmas Parade ~ Lunch at Paquets afterwards.
Dec. 8 DSR Christmas Party at Clubhouse 5:30 P.M.
Dec. 15 Car Display & Gift Distribution at William Green Veteran's Home
Call Leah Musgrove before she calls you!
Dec. 25 Christmas Day ~ Remember the reason for the season.

Important Dates 2002