

July 1996

Sparkplug

NEWSLETTER OF THE
DEEP SOUTH REGION

A.A.C.A.



Vol. 26 No. 7

EDITOR: Patt Paquet

1996 OFFICERS

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VICE PRESIDENT:	Al White	344-2643
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TREASURER:	Lucille Nettles	661-4202
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MEMBER AT LARGE:	Jim Martin	661-6133
		661-4009



AACA...How and Where Did it all Begin ?

How does one begin to tell the exciting story of the Antique Automobile Club of America? The hobby is fascinating to say the least, and the club has enjoyed tremendous growth over the past 61 years. Let's do the obvious---start at the beginning ! This is just what Henry E. Krusen and William E. Bomgardner did in 1985 when they personally interviewed AACA's three living founder members Frank Abramson, Theodore Brooks and Theodore J. Fiala. They began by saying "Let's reminisce. Tell us how it all began."

A Personal Interview

Brooks: Well, when I was growing up there were many horses and carriages. The automobile was being developed and manufactured about the same time, and I became very much interested in those early automobiles. Our family doctor had a 1913 Buick. He soon placed the car on blocks in his stable and purchased another car, a Paige I believe it was. I fell in love with the Buick and I would go to his stable and just sit there and look at it. I did this so much that, believe it or not, he gave me the car! What a thrill! This was about 1924. I drove the Buick in parades and used it in political rallies, etc. Then I heard about the annual automobile derbies being held in Philadelphia and I entered the Buick in several of the derbies.

Krusen: The derby was held in connection with the annual automobile show in Philadelphia, wasn't it?

Brooks: That's right. A derby for older cars was held on the first day of the automobile show introducing the new car models. The older cars had

to be driven at least 25 miles to Philadelphia, and the time it took you to drive the distance was recorded. I would drive to Coatsville, Pennsylvania, which was about 20 miles from Wayne. I would send a telegram to the derby officials at the automobile show and then begin from there to drive to Philadelphia. The officials would clock my time beginning with the time recorded on the telegram. I made the trip in 1935 from Coatsville to Philadelphia's Convention Hall in 59 minutes. If I remember correctly, I received a prize of 5 or 10 dollars.

Abramson: Yes, they had 5-dollar prizes alright, but the ones that were extra special also received 4 quarts of oil! Since the derbies were held in December, the weather was very cold. Ted Fiala and I had a buffalo robe. We used to drive to Philadelphia--no top, no windshield, no nothing! Boy, was it cold.



Frank Abramson, founding member and AACA's first president.

Bomgardner: How did you become interested in automobiles, Ted?

Fiala: Well, I can go back to 1918 when my father had an auto repair business in Philadelphia. Then the flu epidemic hit in 1918 and my father died. Sometime later, my mother married Fred Anderson, the man who took over my father's business, and eventually they

Please see **BEGIN** on Page 3

Minutes
Deep South Region A.A.C.A. June 27, 1996 Meeting

DSR held the June 27, 1996 meeting at the clubhouse with 27 members and four guests present. John Reid, President, called the 7:30 PM meeting to order. Ernie Youens gave the invocation.

Old Business

The antique/vintage license plate debate dominated the beginning of the meeting. The new law will go into effect October 1, 1996 but owners will have one year to comply. DSR has a copy of the law if you are interested you may get a copy. The minutes of the May meeting were approved on a motion by George Demetropulos with a second by Brenda Reid. Lucille Nettles, Treasurer, distributed copies of the May car show report for those interested.

New Business

John asked everyone gathered their opinion of the new officers performance. The members were in agreement that the current officers were doing a good job. Insurance coverage on the building was discussed. Lucille presented the June 1996 financial report. It was noted that the paneling costs exceeded the amount in the building fund. After discussion, Frank DeCrease moved to transfer all monies from the building fund to the general fund, pay the bill due. George Demetropulos seconded the motion. The treasurer's report was accepted on a motion from Ed Lunsford with a second from Lycyle Crowdus. Buddy Paquet, Activities Chairman, mentioned upcoming events, particularly the July outing. On Saturday, July 20, from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM, the club will provide cars for the grand opening of Greer's Tiger Mart in Robertsdale. Everyone was urged to participate. The club will receive \$100 for ten or less cars or \$200 for fifteen or more.

Help for the Hooter's car show, coming up on October 26, 1996, was requested by John Reid. John also mentioned that the Lions Club Charity Show, held in Daphne each year, had initiated the Lloyd Crowdus Memorial Best of Show Trophy beginning this year.

Diana Williamson agreed to chair a committee coordinating interior finishes of the new addition to the clubhouse.

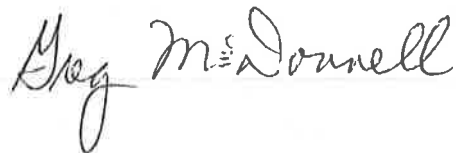
Woody Coale was accepted as a new member.

Announcements

Everyone was invited to a "watermelon cutting" July 28, 1996 at the clubhouse beginning at 2:00 PM. Shelby Bruton donated his collection of *Automobile Quarterly* to the club. Joan Lunsford won the 50-50 pot.

A motion to adjourn came at 8:30 PM from Frank DeCrease with a second from Ross Sloan.

Respectfully submitted,



Begin

(Continued from Page 1)

acquired an estate in Philadelphia. One day, while cleaning out his barn, Mr. Anderson came across an old car. Not having any interest in it, he asked me if I wanted it. I didn't know if I wanted it or not. I was 24 years old then and I didn't even know what kind of a car it was. At that point, I did not accept his offer. Instead, I went to work the next day (Frank Abramson and I worked for the Universal Gun Company in West Philadelphia) and said "Frank, my stepfather has an old car he wants to give me. What do you think we could do with it?" Frank replied, "Well, we could fix it up, drive around the city, and have fun with it." So, I went back to my stepfather and told him I would like the car. He gave it to me and Frank and I did some minor repair work, cleaned it, started it, and drove it around. The car turned out to be a 1907 Waltham-Orient and driving it was great fun! We really never did much to that car. So, by having the car, we saw the Philadelphia newspapers and read about the derbies held each year with the automobile show at Convention Hall, and we asked for an application. The first derby was held in 1931 and we started attending in 1933, two years before we started the Club. By taking an active part in the derbies, we met a number of other car owners and we began talking about forming a club. That's how it all started. We were just a bunch of young kids who wanted a fun club

Krusen: Ted, would you tell the story about using your car to advertise for Wilson's on Walnut Street?

Fiala: Well, during the Depression we advertised for Wilson's Cafe' at 53rd and Walnuts Sts. in Philadelphia. After our regular jobs we would drive around the streets with a big sign on the back of our car. There was no top on the car and we dressed in gay-ninety suits. We would



Theodore Fiala,
founding member and AACAS first secretary.

advertise until midnight and then return to Wilson's

where we were paid. We would have a couple of beers, watch the floor show, and then go home. Other companies saw us and soon we had a number of customers for whom we drove around the city advertising their products. Frank Abramson and I were partners in the enterprise, and with the money we made we bought a 1910 Hupmobile for \$50. That's how we obtained our second car.

Krusen: I'm interested in why you formed the Club. You said you had reasons. Can you tell us your reasons?

Fiala: Well, it was just like Frank said. They gave you money at the Convention Hall and they also gave you tickets worth 50 cents or something like that. The tickets could be used to buy a hot dog and beans, but when you turned in your ticket you had to pay another 2 bucks. Then we stood around in the cold all day. The derby was run by the Automobile Dealers Association and there was no organization. They didn't know what was going on. They weren't really interested in us. They just wanted our cars for publicity. So, of course, we got our names and pictures in the papers and received a lot of publicity. Standing out in the cold all day was probably the main reason for our calling a meeting at the AAA Club at 23 South Third St. in Philadelphia. We mailed out letters of invitation and about 35 people came to the meeting on November 4, 1935. Fourteen of those present at the meeting paid one buck to become charter members and that was all there was to it.

Bomgardner: Can you tell us the connection that the derby at Convention Hall had with Rayburn Plaza in Philadelphia?

Fiala: We would all meet at Rayburn Plaza and then parade down Broad Street finally winding up at at Convention Hall.

Abramson: It wasn't exactly a parade during the first few years. It was a traffic test! In those days your car would not go with all that slow-moving traffic without overheating. We thought it wasn't fair to put these cars through that kind of test. So they changed these rules for us and turned it into a parade from Rayburn Plaza to Convention Hall. In those days, new cars were introduced at the first of the year. That's why the automobile shows were held in December.

Please see **BEGIN** on Page 5

Remember When?

Ernie Youens

Ten years ago, July 1986, the recipe of the month was Janet Yoder's Butterscotch Cake. Les and Janet had retired in Michigan but spent their winters in Mobile. They were members of both DSR and their Michigan region. (In a 1994 AACA Roster there is listed only Mrs. L.J. Yoder in Grand Rapids. Anyone have any further info?)

A summer tour to Arkansas and Missouri had just been completed with 16 adults and five children in five antique cars and one pickup. Having had such a wonderful time a week-long tour to Helen, Georgia was being organized

One of Gavin and Gladys Edwards' cars had appeared recently in *Old Cars Weekly*...Geary Polk's '31 Cadillac was being repaired after the accident...Elven Few had the screws which had been implanted during knee surgery removed (and asked the doctor if he could keep them as they were so expensive he thought maybe they might fit the DeSoto)...Fairhope had informed Cecil that our antique cars would not be needed in the parade on July 4...DSR's good friends Randy Harding and Kirk Hill were in the Great American Race in Randy's 1913 Model T known as "Miss Magnolia"...Ernie was encouraging members to consider being editor of the newsletter next year...the July 26 outing was to be an ice cream social at the clubhouse with home-made ice cream.

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Tragedy Befalls DSR Members

When **DSR member** and volunteer fire-fighter **Roger Vines** and his crew arrived at the scene of the head-on collision, he was horrified by what he found---the body of his father-in-law, Dr. Horace M. Don in the wreckage. Dr. Don was killed June 23, 1996 when the driver of a Corvette passed another vehicle smashing into Don's Camaro. The driver of the Corvette was also killed instantly.

Dr. Don, a family practitioner who retired from practice in Iowa, moved to Mobile with his wife Jean in 1985. He continued to work three days a week to keep himself active and stay on top of the latest medical developments. A devoted sports fan, he was an avid supporter of the Mobile Mystics hockey team.

Our condolences to **Nancy and Roger Vines** and the other members of Mr. Don's family .
A contribution was made by DSR to Theodore United Methodist Church in memory of Dr. Horace M. Don.

The brother of **Geneva Cammon**, James M. Bryant, died June 25, 1996 at the University of Alabama-Birmingham Hospital following a heart attack. Mr. Bryant was 60 years of age, living in Hanceville, Alabama and was the youngest male of the eight Bryant children. Geneva had traveled to Birmingham with her daughter, Donna, on Monday and visited with him briefly in the hospital. The next day she saw him again that morning and he told her he was feeling well. Shortly after noon, while at the home of one of her sisters, she received the news that he had just died.

A contribution was made by DSR to the Glory Hills Church of God in Good Hope, Alabama in Mr. Bryant's memory.

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 at 951 Forest Hill Drive. Membership in the Antique Automobile Club of America is required to be a member of this region. Annual local dues are \$15 and AACA national dues are \$24 single and \$26 joint. Views expressed in the Sparkplug are not necessarily those of the Region officers or AACA.

Begin

(Continued from Page 3)

Krusen: So you were unhappy with the way you were treated at the derby. Did you also have a real interest in preserving cars at that time?

Abramson: We found out later that a lot of people didn't want to be known as a car collector since they felt that the publicity would increase the old car prices. I received nasty letters for publicizing this thing. However, there were a lot of old fields and junk yards where I lived. Driving past the old fields you would see some beautiful old-time cars laying in a heap ready to be chopped up. It would really break your heart. And I thought, maybe someday, we would be able to do something about it. Sure enough, I think it turned out that we saved a lot of these old cars!

Bomgardner: I'm curious. Why did you name the new club the "Antique Automobile Club of America"? You were obviously thinking of the entire country rather than just the Philadelphia area.

Fiala: Why did we name the club the "Antique Automobile Club of America"? Well, it just came out that way. There was no underlying reason.

Krusen: When did you elect your first officers?

Abramson: The officers were elected at that first meeting. I was elected president, Earle Eckel was elected vice-president and Ted Fiala was elected the secretary.

Bomgardner: How did you happen to adopt the 1896 Duryea as the car in the club logo?

Fiala: We had a postcard advertising the circus that was presenting the circus acts in Philadelphia. It was billed as the "Greatest Show on Earth". The 1896 Duryea was on display at the circus every day. We decided that we should have that Duryea as our emblem. We didn't know who Duryea was and we knew nothing about the car. We just liked it, so that is why we chose it for our emblem. The postcard said it was the oldest car in America and that was good enough for us!

Krusen: When did you write the by-laws?

Brooks: A committee was appointed to write the by-laws. I was a member of that committee and I had a friend who was a lawyer. He was also a member of the Club. He helped me to write the constitution and by-laws so they were very legal.

They were not written that first meeting. It was done at a later date.

Bomgardner: When did you publish a club newsletter and what was it called?

Abramson: We started the newsletter in 1937 and it was named "The Bulletin". It consisted of two mimeographed pages folded in half to produce 8 printed pages. My wife, Fran, and Ted Fiala's wife, Sue, did a lot of work on producing the bulletin. Of course, we were not married at that time, only engaged. Sue did a lot of the typing and mailing and all of the mimeograph work.

Krusen: Is that the mimeograph machine that we have at National Headquarters?

Abramson: Yes, that's the one. Charles Duryea gave it to us to use.

Krusen: What was the club's first activity?

Brooks: The first official club outing was held in June of 1938 at Martin's Dam. A committee was appointed to arrange this first tour. George Hughes, Hyde Ballard and myself made up the committee. We made up a set of rules and mailed an application to the club members. Five members signed up:



*Theodore Brooks,
founding member.*

Abramson -- 1910 Hupmobile, Ted Brooks -- 1912 Buick, Hyde Ballard -- 1905 Packard, George Huges -- 1915 Ford and Ted Fiala -- 1907 Orient. Prior to this first activity, our Club participated in two Philadelphia antique auto derbies, the Philadelphia Mummies Parade in June of 1936 and the Trenton Antique Auto Derby in November 1936. We also entered our cars in the Washington Horseless Carriage Cavalcade in November 1936.

Bomgardner: Where and when was the second outing held?

Brooks: Well, after the Martin's Dam outing, we went to the P.D. Folwell estate in Merion, Pennsylvania. This was on Sunday, August 13, 1939. P.D. Folwell was Hyde Ballard's father-in-law.

Please see **BEGIN** on Page 7

DSR Welcomes Another New Member

A bounty hunter, you say? That's what our newest DSR member **William (Woody) Coale** told me when I asked him what type work he did prior to establishing his own concrete business seven years ago. He worked as a bail bondsman which is in effect, a modern-day bounty hunter.

Entering the world 35-plus years ago on his grandmother's kitchen table in Foley, Alabama, he was moved to Eight Mile at the age of six months when his father joined the Prichard Police Department. After graduating from Vigor, he tried his hand at several different occupations and also tried living in different areas of the country. But as the old saying goes "There's no place like home!" so he returned to the Mobile area.

Woody's other hobbies include motorcycles and guns. He is a Marksman with a pistol and served with the Mobile County Sheriff's Reserves for a period of time. He rides his motorcycle to the meetings and has ridden in the MDA motorcycle ride all three years. His antique vehicle is a 1967 Plymouth Satellite which is in the restoration process but nearing completion.

I asked him to describe himself in one word and he replied "laid-back". (Is that one or two?) He said that did not mean lazy but relaxed about life. "If you let the little things get you down, what are you going to do when the big ones come along?" he asked to make his point.

When you add him to your roster, his address is 4751 Old Citronelle Hwy-Eight Mile, AL 36613-Telephone 457-4841.

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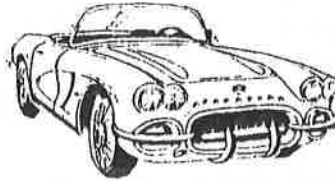
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Bob Gechjian

Members in the News

The Fall & Winter Bridal Guide in the June 23 issue of the *Mobile Press Register* contained an article about **Aileen Hunt's** wedding consulting business which she started 30 years ago.

Jane Bruton, Director of Admissions for the Rotary Rehabilitation Center, appeared on *Healthcare Today* which was shown June 23 on Channel 6 TV.

What Didn't Make TV or the Newspaper

Shelby Bruton has donated 10 years of *Automobile Quarterly* to the club for use by the members. Does anyone have a bookcase that they no longer need?

The front porch of the clubhouse will be refinished as soon as the weather cools thanks to **Jim Martin** and his association with Wood Protection Products.

Ernie & Eugenia Youens house was struck by lightning causing a fire June 22. Fortunately, they were at home and it was extinguished before it could do major damage.

Diana Williamson has agreed to head a committee to do the window treatment and decorate the addition to the clubhouse.

Hershel & Frances Whigham, along with their square dance group, were in San Antonio, TX for a competition June 25-30.

Begin

(Continued from Page 5)

The estate was gigantic! Twenty-five club members participated with 11 antique cars and one antique motorcycle. Mrs. Charles E. Duryea and her daughters, Grace Duryea and Rhea Duryea Johnson, were guests of honor. Charles E. Duryea died the year before.

Krusen: These annual outings were eventually to become known as the club's annual Spring Meet, were they not?

Brooks: That's right. The Spring Meet was held at Folwell's through 1941. In 1942, the location was changed to the Lamb Tavern in Springfield, Pennsylvania.

Bomgardner: Our hats are off to you. Henry and I have thoroughly enjoyed chatting with the three of you and your wives and learning of those early days of the hobby and the beginnings of AACA. Thank you very much.

An Observation

Well, now you know "how it all began" courtesy of three of AACA's founding members. They recognized a need and capitalized on it. They loved cars and they loved getting together and driving them. Those early meets were fun meets. The members compared notes, talked shop, participated in car games and just plain "had lots of fun"! They were exciting times. The country was recovering from the Depression. Things were looking up. The future looked bright for the infant AACA. Little did the founding fathers know how the Club would grow. It was to flourish beyond their wildest dreams.

Reprinted courtesy of *Antique Automobile*, official publication of the Antique Automobile Club of America, Inc.

There were 14 founding members who started AACA, the only one still living is Mr. Frank Abramson.

Editors Note: This is the first in a series of articles on the AACA. The next issue will track the club through the war years and into the next decade. You will find out how the regions and chapters developed.

Technically Speaking...

Pierre Fontana

In the year of 1889, two men were arguing about whom had the fastest car. A man named Laubat and one name Jenatzy.

It was Spring in Paris. Jenatzy built a car, name it "Jamais Contante" which means "never satisfied". It looked like a drop tank from a WW II Mustang fighter plane, with a hole to sit in, a tiller and four wheels. Maximum horse power was 12 HP from two electric motors driven at 1,000 RPM.

The over-volted motors could only last for a short time. He rang up a speed of 65.8 miles per hour; that figure stood unbroken for three years.

It was the first car built just to break a world speed record, and break the belief that a man would suffocate at such speed.

The car is preserved today, in a museum at Compiegne with many very old cars. World War I's armistice was signed in that small town in France in 1918.

Making an old T-bird air conditioner and heater work frustrated my efforts in making all the necessary "doors" open and close like they should because of vacuum losses at the small activators. The diaphragms inside were leaking too much to do their job. The original parts are next to impossible to find.

There is an easy solution. Ford makes a universal part and they call it "door motor". It is Motorcraft Part # YH161. It comes with a long control arm with several holes spaced on the control rod. You cut it as necessary. It will fit either of the three different ones used as original. Any questions...call me at 661-7098.

You Might be a Redneck if ...

You own a home that is mobile and 14 cars that aren't...or you consider your wife and your mother-in-law dual air bags...or you wife says "Honey, move this transmission, I want to take a bath."

Jeff Foxworthy

Copied from *The Crank*, Fred Wilbert, Editor

Autorama '96

This is the only kind of show you want to go to in mid-July; one that is inside with air-conditioning! The six clubs which go together to host this annual event are the Coast Mississippi Muscle Car Club, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Corvette Club, the Antique Automobile & Engine Club of Mississippi, the Mississippi Coast Mustang Club, the Gulf Coast Mopar Club and Innovative Trends.

Cars moving into the Coliseum seemed to go a little faster this year due to some changes made in the registration procedure but some of the car owners who were in line out in the heat might not think so. Included in the registration fee was a cook-out Friday evening at the Coliseum and on Saturday night, a "Blow-out" at the President Casino.

Among the 270 entries registered for judging were vehicles belonging to the **Burdeshaws, R. Cochran, the Ebls, J. Finley, J. Henderson, and the Paquets.**

Visiting during the weekend were **R. Coker, G. McDonnell, J. Martin, L. Nelson, the Reids, the Rowells and M. Williamson** with his son, **Stephen.**

The best thing about this show is that all of the proceeds from the show and events connected with it go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Mississippi and this year the amount is a little over \$6,000! Congratulations to the hosting clubs and all of the competitors for making this happen!



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TO: Deep South Region AACA
FROM: Jan Hyche, President
Dixie Region AACA

It is my pleasure to invite you to attend Ron & Liz Moore's annual "DRIVE THROUGH THE PAST" co-hosted by the Dixie Region.

PLACE: Ron & Liz Moore's Antique Car Bar
Moore Oil Company
1800 Center Point Road
Birmingham, AL
(205) 853-1533 or (205) 853-2450

DATE: August 24, 1996

TIME: 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM

DRESS: Casual

Everyone is eligible for individual prizes as well as being counted with your car club for the participation awards.

Individual Awards

1. Longest Distance Driven in Antique Car
2. Oldest Car
3. Most Enchanting Classic
4. Nicest Thing on Two Wheels
5. People's Choice
6. Hard Luck

Car Club Awards

1. \$100 First - most participating members
2. \$ 50 Second - most participating members
3. \$ 35 Third - most participating members

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Watermelon Cuttin' Time

How about an outing where all that is required is only a telephone call and then just show up? That's exactly what the July outing will be on Sunday afternoon, July 28 starting at 2:00 PM in the clubhouse. You will not be required to do any work; just "eatin' watermelon and spittin' seeds". Maybe we could have a contest on that. If you would like to partake of all the ice-cold melon you can eat, just give Buddy a call at 661-4009 by July 26 so he will know how many to plan for.

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The editor has received a request from the AACAA Library & Research Center to remind our cooks that they need more recipes for the cookbook which is being prepared. The deadline to submit your favorite is July 31, 1996.

RECIPE FORM

Recipe Number _____



Only one recipe to a page
Circle Category

- Appetizers, Beverages & Dips
- Breads
- Cakes and Frostings
- Casseroles
- Cookies and Candy
- Fish and Poultry

- Main Dishes
- Microwave
- Pastries and Desserts
- Soups and Salads
- Vegetables
- Miscellaneous
- Other _____

Name of Recipe

Your Name and Region
(Print exactly as you want it to appear in the book)

Ingredients:

Directions: (Please be very clear and thorough in your instructions)

IMPORTANT DATES

July:

- July 25:** DSR Meeting in clubhouse at 7:30 PM
July 28: Watermelon Cuttin' - 2:00 PM - DSR Clubhouse
July 26-28: Catfish Run XII - Sardis, MS (Pre '49 Cars Only) Info - Red Hudson (601)563-8864
July 27-28: The Great American Duck Race at Flint Creek in Wiggins, MS (NON-JUDGED Show both days) Info - Kyle (601)831-2650

August:

- Aug. 3:** Summer Showdown 3 Car & Truck Show sponsored by Bay Minette Jaycees
Rain date Aug. 10 - Info Greg Mais (334)937-7784 or Jody Harrison (334)937-0021
Aug. 29: West Florida Region AACA's 29th annual show in Seville Square-Pensacola, FL
Info - John Webster (904)455-7184 or Todd Chappell (904)436-7610
Aug. 30-31: 5th Annual Hadji Shrine Temple Magic Carpet Car Show & Swap Meet in Pensacola, FL Info - Jerry Thompson (904)587-2374

September:

- Sept. 2:** 51st Annual Labor Day Celebration at the Great Gulf State Fairgrounds in Mobile, AL
Info - Gayle Reinhart (days) (334)661-4635 (evenings) 661-2011
Sept. 14: 5th Annual Daphne-Spanish Fort Lions Club Grand Jubilee Charity Auto Show
Eastern Shore Cinema parking lot on Highway 98 in Daphne

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

