

## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary AACA Founders Tour

Mildred & Al Lawson, and Lou Fritz

This was the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the AACA Founders Tour, held the week of November 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in the upstate part of South Carolina. Governor Mark Sanford declared it “Antique Automobile Week in South Carolina”, as did Pickens County where the Easley hub city is located.

The weather couldn't have been better and the fall foliage was at the peak colors for the 115 cars on tour. Thirteen AACA members have been on all twenty tours. Mary Jane and Lou Fritz (1957 Porsche) and Martha and Cliff Phipps (1957 Chevrolet) have driven the same car on all twenty tours. The Lawsons have been on all the tours – 1957 Chevrolet, eight; 1963 Thunderbird, ten; and 1965 Mustang, two. Other current and past Club members on this tour were: Franklin Gage, Mary Jean and Bob Wilhelm, former AACA President and Club members Judy and Howard Scotland, and former AACA President and Club members Judy and Earl Beauchamp.

The Lawson's left home Friday and drove to Roanoke, VA for an overnight.

The next morning, Al put their suitcases in the trunk and slammed the lid. He tried to open the trunk to put something else in, but it wouldn't open. While he worked on the trunk lid a young man approached in a pickup and asked if he needed help. Long story short, the young man also had antique cars and he and a friend determined that the best solution was to remove the back seat, move the luggage and pop the lid. In no time the lid was open and Al couldn't thank them enough.

Keep in mind that all these National Tours are about gently driving scenic routes, visiting local places of interest, and, of course, eating lots of good food. This tour didn't disappoint. **Sunday** at the Jameson Inn host hotel, there was a “Meet and Greet” appetizer dinner.

**Monday:** Our first stop was the Old Pickens Presbyterian church for coffee and pastries. Next stop was Duke Power's World of Energy. Lunch was at Aunt Sue's, which was good for a few pounds. The afternoon stops were Hagood Mauldin House and the Pickens Museum. **Tuesday:** Coffee

was Baker's Museum in Liberty. This was a must stop because of the really rare cars and a house full of a lifetime of collecting. Then we stopped at Woodburn Plantation in Pendleton. Lunch was at Collins Inn. The afternoon was taken up by the Central History Museum. Dinner was a pizza party in the Jameson Inn parking lot. Tasty stuff. **Wednesday:** The coffee stop was at Benson's Automotive Memory Lane. This is one of the finest collections of 50s cars that you will ever find. Next we were at the BMW manufacturing plant. In the auditorium, we saw a presentation of old ads, and then we were taken to the employees lunchroom where we had a terrific buffet. There were so many choices that it took half the lunch break to decide. **Thursday:** The first stop was Hagood Mill, an operating grist mill. After the coffee stop we were on our own to tour Ashtabula Plantation. The buffet banquet was held at Smithfield Country Club. The oldest participant on this tour was Herb. Karner, from Oklahoma. He drove 1,340 miles, and is 94 years old.



*Shown clockwise from the top left: Judy & Earl Beauchamp, Judy & Howard Scotland, 1947 Hudson convertible owned by Park Waldrop at Aunt Sue's, and Tim Taylor's 1936 Ford convertible. It was Tim's first Founders Tour.*

