

## **North Florida Model T/A Tour 2025**

The North Florida Model T/A tour has been an annual event for over 15 years (except for a few covid years). This year's event hosted enthusiasts from 10 states including FL, AL, MS, GA, MI, NC, IN, SC, VA and NY.

41 Model A's and 14 Model T's with 120 participants made the trip to this wonderful 5-day tour with this year's hub in beautiful Tallahassee. Throughout the week we visited some of the most interesting sites in both North Florida and Southern Georgia.



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### Day 1

The day began with rain, but that did not dampen our enthusiasm to get out and drive! Our 1<sup>st</sup> stop was a private collection which housed some unique antique automobiles, motorcycles, and memorabilia. We spent several hours admiring these unique pieces of rolling history. Our hosts were very gracious, and we very much appreciated the hospitality.



*Morning line up at private collection*

Departing the private collection we then headed for the National High Magnetic Field Lab in Tallahassee. This lab hosts roughly 2000 scientist per year from across the globe and boast over 70 powerful magnets and 17 records in the Guinness Book of World Records. Researchers use these unique instruments to make fundamental discoveries that shape our future. Among the most important discoveries from such efforts are those related to material substances research & medical imaging. Our tours guides were very informative and added much insight to the inner workings of the Maglab.

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*View of one of the many National Maglab's testing rooms*

The final stop of the day was the Tallahassee Museum. A collection of historical buildings, and trails/boardwalks from which to view Florida wildlife in its native setting as well as car-parts sculptures throughout the 52 acres.

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### Day 2

On day 2 we were blessed with full sunshine and 75-degree weather. The Model A was running great, and we were ready for the “Forgotten Coast Tour” of 154 miles. This would be our longest tour of the week taking us to the Gulf Specimen Marine Lab in Panacea, Camp Gordon Johnston WW II Museum in Carrabelle, and finally through National and State forests.

The Gulf Specimen Marine Lab is an interactive lab meant to educate, rescue, and protect Florida’s native species through research and outreach. Unlike most aquariums the lab focuses on smaller fish & crustaceans including several invasive species. Being new to Florida we were educated on many local species and how they interact and support the ecosystem.



*Our tour guide at the Gulf Specimen Marine Lab educates the group on Florida’s local shellfish habitat.*

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After lunch in the seaside town of Carrabelle, we visited the Gordon Johnston WWII museum to honor our veterans and were reminded of the sacrifices made by so many of our fellow citizens. Camp Gordon Johnston was established in 1942 to train US Army infantry with amphibious vehicles along the shoreline. Over 250,000 infantry men were trained to support the war effort until the camps closing in 1946. It was good to be reminded of the sacrifices and how blessed we truly are to live in the USA.



*Model A/T Touring groups coming and going at the Gordon Johnston WWII Museum*

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### Day 3

Day 3 started with the tour leading us to the North Florida Wildlife Center in Lamont, FL. The center is renowned for captive breeding of endangered animals to prevent extinction. These efforts have had a positive impact around the globe. It was evident the animals were well cared for and spirited making this venue one of the most visited in North Florida. Upon completing our visit, it was off to the town of Monticello for lunch and then our final destination to the Tallahassee Automobile Museum.



*A very interesting bird at the North Florida Wildlife Center*

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The Tallahassee Automobile Museum was quite a treat as the facility displays many collections beyond the 170 exceptional automobiles. These include motorcycles, boats, Steinway Pianos, pedal cars, and more. Certainly, one of the largest collections of outboard motors I have ever seen (in the hundreds). We spent most of the afternoon enjoying these outstanding collections. Then it was off to dinner to reminisce about our day and get ready for tomorrow's adventure.



*A portion of the outboard motor collection at the Tallahassee Automobile Museum*

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### **Day 4**

Day 4 included a tour to Wakulla Springs State Park and the lighthouse at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. In addition to touring through beautiful coastal communities we also experienced some dirt road driving! Within the Refuge there were many opportunities to enjoy viewing the wildlife in their natural habitats. On the peninsula of the refuge was the St. Marks Lighthouse. Built in 1829 as a navigational aide, the lighthouse also has a unique history related to the civil war as costal raids were a primary means of attack against the Confederacy in Florida. Today the lighthouse stands as a prominent structure in the refuge and a popular tourist destination.



*Model A's taking the dirt roads to the St Marks Lighthouse.*

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*St. Marks lighthouse as seen from the beachfront.*

### **Day 5**

Our final day of touring took us to Bradley's Country Store in Tallahassee and the beautiful town of Thomasville, GA. The country store was built in 1927 and is still run by the Bradley family. Known for their famous smoked sausage, the operation is fully intact with its smokehouse and deli continuing to serve

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customers as they did in the Model A era. This authentic country story and setting was a wonderful way to start our day and reminisce of days gone by.



*Taking a break on the Bradley's Country Store front porch*

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*Model A's parked under the grand Oak tree at Bradley's Country Store*

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*Functioning smokehouse at Bradley's Country Store producing their famous smoked sausage*

A southern style buffet awaited us at the Market Diner in Thomasville, GA. The proprietors and staff were very welcoming and truly enjoyed looking at our vintage automobiles. After lunch we visited the cobblestone streets of Thomasville for some shopping therapy and enjoyed the sights & sounds of

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this beautiful southern gem. Some of the group returned for more time at the Tallahassee Auto Museum. What a great way to end our day.



*Touring line up at the Market diner in Thomasville, Ga.*

**Heading home...** For us, home is a 200-mile ride to the Villages, FL. My wife Kerrie and I truly enjoyed this regional tour and appreciate the amount of work and dedication it takes to organize such an event.

We want to thank our tour directors/ hosts Chuck & Karolyn Kunstbeck, members of the George Washington Chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA) and the Tallahassee Region of the Antique Auto Club of America (TRAACA) and Phil & Sue Williams also members of MAFCA and TRAACA for continuing this tradition and promoting this tour. We look forward to next year's tour. See you down the road!

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### About the author....



Bill Brum and his wife Kerrie live in the Villages, Fl. They are members of the **Heart of Florida Model A Restorers Club** and own a 1930 Model A Town Sedan. They are also members of the National Model A Restorers Club (MARC) and Model A Ford Club of America(MAFCA). Bill & Kerrie enjoy touring and have been involved in the antique car hobby for 30 years.