

# Jeff and Susan Lane

Auto museum founders, trans-continental vintage rally participants and purveyors of the wild and wonderful

By Mark J. McCourt

Photography by Roy Query, and courtesy Lane Motor Museum



## Although car guys and gals

around the world are as diverse in scope as the vehicles they are passionate about, they will all admit to sharing dreams of surrounding themselves with a collection of cool cars and driving those cars through fascinating places in the company of like-minded enthusiasts. Few people ever get the opportunity to actually live this dream, but for Jeff and Susan Lane, it is their everyday reality, and they never tire of it.

This husband-and-wife team founded the Lane Motor Museum; it was a desire to bring Jeff's then near-80 vehicle collection under one roof that led them to purchase the former Sunbeam bakery plant in Nashville, Tennessee, with its roughly

40,000-square-foot open main floor, for this purpose.

Jeff began collecting unusual automobiles and motorcycles piecemeal, as the enthusiasm ran in his blood; his father had started an automotive supply business, and his grandfather sold Fords in a small town in their native Michigan. Twelve year-old Jeff's first car was a 1955 MG TF, a disassembled restoration project that he and his father rebuilt in time to for him to take his driver's license test. After purchasing a new Porsche 911SC in 1983, he began picking up more cars that interested him, including a 1960 Dodge Power Wagon and a 1973 Citroën SM. He moved to Nashville in the mid-1980s, and his passion for unusual and techni-

cally significant automobiles, especially those of European extraction, led him to expand his collection in the 1990s.

New Hampshire native Susan was also living in Nashville when she met Jeff in 1999. "I used to attend car shows with my brother, who is into 1960s American cars," she explains. "When I met Jeff, I could appreciate his enthusiasm for vintage cars. Engines and rpms excite him. I look at cars more for their history and beauty." She encouraged his habit; "His collection of cars was housed in buildings around town. When we married, I suggested we get them under one roof. He had no plans beyond buying interesting cars, but didn't hesitate when I suggested we open a museum. We looked for a building that was within a