

South Bend '97 33rd International SDC Meet

by Patrick Billey

"We have often heard SDC members say that their lifelong dream was to bring their Studebaker home to South Bend. We never in our wildest dreams could have really understood their feelings until now. We brought our Bullet-nose home, and it was an unqualified emotional experience—one never to be equaled."

These kind words received from SDC members Pat and Larry Merhaut, Martinsburg, West Virginia, were echoed in the numerous letters that we received after the Meet from so many of the SDC membership.

The success of any International Meet is attributed of course to the planning and organizing of the Meet Committee, the Community and the Sponsors that have supported the Meet. But most of all, no Meet would be successful if it were not for the support of the SDC membership. We, of the Michiana Chapter, extend our

gratitude to each SDC member who supported the 33rd International Meet with your attendance and participation.

SDC Members began arriving on Friday afternoon. By Saturday afternoon we were seeing, like the song says, "all those old familiar faces," and it was sure good to have them "home." One of the first

guests to arrive on Friday was Ernami Lima, better known as Mr. Lima, from Brazil. Many of you made his acquaintance during the week and, I believe, have a new friend.

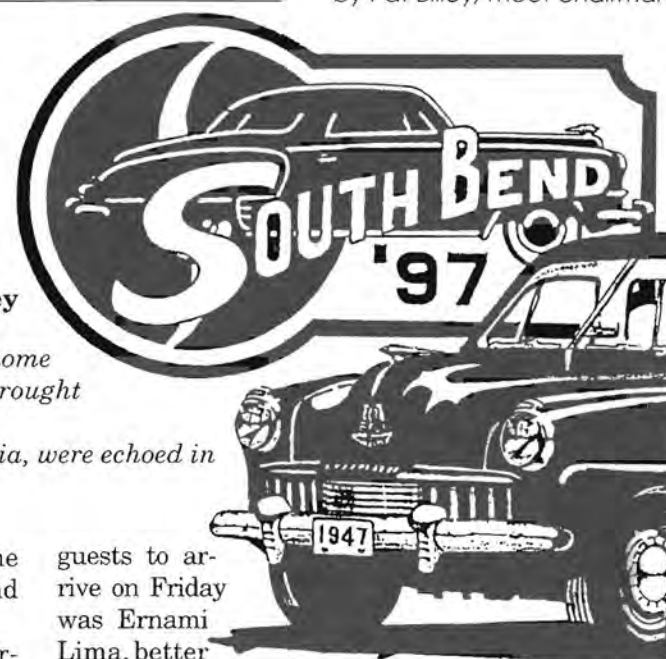


Photo by Bee Hamlin.

Displays in the atrium of the Marriott.



Photo by John Cosby

A 1957 Golden Hawk and a 1990 Avanti Touring Sedan queue up at the Marriott.



Photo by Ken & Eleanor Blume

Larry Johnson's 1949 Champion convertible on display at the Century Center.

SDC members continued to arrive on Saturday and when the Meet registration officially opened on Sunday our volunteers were in high gear "welcoming you home." Swap Meet vendors were busy with the drill of unloading those precious Studebaker parts and memorabilia and setting up for a week of fun. As each of the SDC members arrived, so did the Studebakers. What a sight to see the streets of South Bend begin to fill up with our favorite cars!

Two of the famous Wilk Brothers at Monday night's Opening Reception. Former employees were honored at this reception.



Photo by Gregg Shaffer



Photo by Ken & Eleanor Blume

Swap Meet vendor displays at the Century Center.

Monday's events included the National Board Meeting, the Swap Meet, tours of the "Hummer Plant", the University of Notre Dame, and The Studebaker Story Tour. The Studebaker Story Tour had been sold out and was an extremely popular tour. These tours, plus several others, were available and enjoyed by over 1,440 members throughout the week.

To end the evening on Monday, we wanted to recognize some very special guests at our Opening Reception. We invited as our guest, several former Studebaker employees and those of you who were in attendance were able to hear first hand accounts of what it was like to have been a "Studebaker" man

SDC Board Members at the General Membership Meeting. Pat Billey at the podium welcoming all to the International Meet.



Photo by Ken & Eleanor Blume

Larry Swanson, SDC Publications Director, chairing the Editors' Meeting.



Photo by Ken & Eleanor Blume

or woman. Each guest had so many stories, photos and memorabilia to share that the "reunion" continued after the Opening Reception had officially ended. It is always remarkable to just sit and listen to these former Studebaker builders reminisce.

In conjunction with the regularly scheduled events for Tuesday, the Editors Meeting and the Chapter Presidents Meeting were held. Tuesday evening concluded with the General Membership Meeting to summarize the National Board Meeting, introduce the newly elected SDC officers and award the 36th International SDC Meet to Madison, Wisconsin, for the year 2000. Texas will be hosting the Meet in 1998, and South Dakota will be hosting it in 1999.



Photo by John Cosby.

The Studebaker National Museum Auction.

Highlighting the scheduled events on Wednesday was a very interesting auction that benefited the Studebaker National Museum. Approximately ten vehicles from the Museum were consigned to this auction. This collection of duplicate vehicles, a school bus and last minute donated Hawk brought the bidding to a feverish pitch as the auctioneer scanned the crowd for a sale. As the gavel dropped for the last time and the cry of "sold" was heard, over \$23,000 was on its way to The Studebaker National Museum and all of the vehicles had new owners.

Not to be outdone, the same auctioneer worked the SDC crowd at the National Auction later that evening. An interesting variety of items were do-



Photo by Ken & Eleanor Blume.

SDC Auction items on display.

33rd International Meet Statistics

Total Registrations	1,062
Tours	1,440
Swap Meet Vendor Spaces	127
Concours "Judged"	336
Concours "Display"	221

nated for the auction to help raise funds for the National. We had a very large crowd for this year's auction and were able to raise just over \$4,400 from the 1997 National Auction. At the conclusion of the auction, one was able to find most "Studebaker" owners burning the midnight oil as they began the ritual of concours preparation. Some, I'm told, never saw their motel rooms and only stopped long enough to freshen up before leaving for the "big show."



Photo by Gregg Shaffer.

"My Classic Car" host Dennis Gage at the Concours.

That "big show" of course was Concours Day. This year, we selected the University of Notre Dame for the Concours location. Concours photos were scheduled throughout the week and were taken in front of former "Studebaker Mansion"



Photo by David Arnold.

The Concours show field at Notre Dame University (for another view, see the back cover).

which is now the home of "Tippecanoe Place." Concours day dawned with a beautiful sunrise and provided one of the most gorgeous Concours days in recent years. And the Studebakers, they just kept coming and coming ... all 557 of them. If you missed this Meet, we can forgive you, but if you missed this Concours, you'll have to forgive yourself. Our expectations for the Concours were fulfilled beyond words.

The Concours sights and sounds, as well as the entire Meet, were captured on video by Wheatland Productions and produced into our official Meet Video which is now available. Bradley David Productions, Inc., who produces the television show "My Classic Car" Video Magazine, also had a film crew on hand and has produced a show segment which will be

televised nationally. The show is tentatively scheduled to air on TNN twice during the third weekend of January, 1998.

This year's Concours included so many wonderful Studebakers that it is almost impossible to have selected a favorite. Some of the more memorable

Watch Concours Results

Chief Judge: George Reitenour
Judging Staff: W. Francisco, D. Lockmon

Best of Show (all sizes): Bob Grove

Most Accurate Watch

- 1) Michelle Myer, 10 sec
- 2) Wayne Francisco, 12 sec
- 3) James Snyder, 15 sec

Senior Class

- 1) Wayne Francisco, 87 pts
- 2) Alita Millette, 80 pts
- 3) Alita Millette, 78 pts

Class A (size 16-18)

- 1) Joseph Barker, 82 pts
- 2) Wayne Francisco, tie - 80 pts*
- 3) John Verrill, tie - 80 pts*

* coin toss, win went to W. Francisco

Class B (size 12)

- 1) Lester Diamond, 79 pts
- 2) James Snyder, tie - 77 pts*
- 3) Vester Brommelt, tie - 77 pts*

* coin toss, win went to J. Snyder

Class C (size 6-0)

- 1) Bonita Harger, 84 pts
- 2) Wayne Francisco, 77 pts
- 3) Jackie Harrison, 74 pts

Model Car Contest Awards

Factory Assembled

Under 16 - none

- 16 & Above: 1) Wayne Francisco
2) Mary Jo Beck
3) Joe Inman

Scratch Built

Under 16: 1) Ivan Clark

- 16 & Above: 1) Bruce Anderson
2) Chuck Naugle

Kits

- Under 16: 1) Bill Rodhouse
2) John Rodhouse

- 16 & Above: 1) Matthew Wendt
2) Larry Tholen

Modified Kits

Under 16: 1) Eric King

- 16 & Above: 1) Pat Billey
2) Lewis Dandurand
3) Mike Wallace

Display/Diorama

Under 16: 1) Mark Lepay

- 16 & Above: 1) Bruce Slifer
2) Dick Beck
3) John Caskey

Front Cover

As our front cover testifies, the gathering of the Studebaker Truck Farmers has grown to be a major event at international meets. Thanks to all those who participated in this year's photo session, and special thanks to Chuck Naugle for publicizing the event during the past year. Photo by John Cosby. ♦

About Cover Photos



Fred K. Fox,
Turning Wheels
Covers Editor



Back Cover

An aerial view of the 1997 Concours field at Notre Dame University. Can you spot your Studebaker? Photo courtesy of Bill Steinmetz. Copies of this photo or one that also includes most of the University can be purchased from Bill. Prices are \$10 + \$3 postage for a 5x7; \$20 + \$3 postage for an 8x10; and \$30 + \$3 postage for an 11x14. Contact Bill at 66090 Oak Road, Lakeville IN 46536 or call (219) 656-4950 or fax: (219) 656-3603. ♦

Inside Front Cover

Groundbreaking for the new Studebaker National Museum. This ceremony was held Friday, June 27, 1997. Shown left to right in the foreground are Patrick Billey, Museum Board President and 1997 International Meet Chairman; Brian Millette, SDC President; Stephen Luecke, Mayor of South Bend; and Rolland Kelly, South Bend City Council member. At the podium is Ron Radecki, Director of the Studebaker National Museum. Photo courtesy of Gregg Shaffer. ♦

Inside Back Cover

Special attendees at this year's International were Craig and Lori Erickson of Fresno, California. They were married at Lake Tahoe on June 21, 1997, and then took their honeymoon trip to South Bend. They pulled the camp trailer (shown in the photo) with their 1964 Gran Turismo Hawk. Prior to the trip, they gave the historic trailer a full restoration. They made it to South Bend and back with no problems. Photo by John Cosby. ♦



Photo by John Cosby

A 1997 AVX. Compare to the original Avanti design on the right.



Photo by Bee Hamlin

Jim Lange's record breaking 211 mph Studebaker powered Avanti.



Photo by David Arnold

Another Concours snoozer was Michelle Myer, shown here with her 1960 Lark VIII convertible. Note the drive-in food tray.

Concours vehicles included the School Bus that was auctioned off the day before, the fabulous AVX production car, a host of beautiful prewar Studebakers and a fleet of Commercial Trucks that you had to see to believe. This assemblage of Commercial Trucks was due in part to none other than "Hee Haw" Chuck Naugle who spread the word to the Studebaker Truck Farmers (see front cover).

As one walked up and down the aisles of Bullet-noses, Hawks, Coupes and Hardtops, it was difficult not to lose one's focus and gaze into the next aisle of early postwar Commanders, Presidents, Champions



Photo by Bee Hamlin

Sam and Kathy Sandifer's '50 bullet-nose mini street rod and Russian pedal car.



Photo by Chuck Naugle

Mini Truck Farmers, Aaron & Sabrina Welch, in front of Ford Stoecker's 1937 Coupe-Express and 1963 8E15 Diesel.



Photo by John Cosby

The 1950-52 row at the Concours. What a salute to Studebaker!



Photo by John Cosby

John Thomas Kaczmarek taking a break from the Concours in the back of his dad's 1950 Champion four-door sedan.

Jack Reed, Assistant to the Mayor of South Bend, takes a turn at Chuck Naugle's Studebaker Corn Sheller.



Photo by John Cosby



Photo courtesy of Chuck Naugle.

Another Studebaker Corn Sheller was brought to the meet by Jim Kile. Standing by Jim's sheller are (left to right) Chuck Naugle, Clayton Mourning and Carroll Studebaker. Chuck and Clayton started to work for Studebaker in 1948 on the very same day.



Photo by Gregg Shaffer.

A model of the new museum at the groundbreaking ceremony. Museum Director Ron Radecki is at the podium.



Photo by Gregg Shaffer.

Fun Night concluded the day's events with merry entertainment from "Studebaker John and the Hawks" who introduced many to Chicago Land "Blues." We all received a special treat when the SDC members from New Zealand

The children enjoyed the clown at Fun Night.



Photo by John Cosby.

Harry and Norah Barnes, SDC founders, at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new museum. Pat Billey is at the podium. For another ground-breaking photo, see the inside front cover.

Groundbreaking was held for the new Studebaker National Museum. Several hundred SDC members were on hand as the earth was turned and commitments from the City of South Bend were reaffirmed. The Groundbreaking Ceremony included a mini

Lloyd Moore took the "Longest Beard" award at the Studebaker Brothers Beard Contest. Lloyd notes, "Driving Studes is more fun than shaving." Explaining the bugs in his beard, he quipped, "The window was stuck open on my Studebaker truck when I drove through Bugtustle."



Photo by John Cosby.

Concours when The Antique Studebaker Club marshaled their cars at the museum in preparation for a road trip. Immediately after the Groundbreaking, judging for The Studebaker Brothers Beard Contest was held. This was a very popular event as attested by the number of participants.

Then it was off to the Co-Operator Sessions and Seminars. What an opportunity to again listen to the Studebaker history from guests including Otis Romine, Harold Johnson, Eli Spicer, Carl Thompson, Lester Fox and Co-founder of NASCAR, Frank Mundy. I strongly suggest that you do not miss any opportunity to absorb the rich history that is still available from many of these living contributors to all that Studebaker is and was.

The day was not yet over, the peaceful calm of a pleasant Friday afternoon was soon to be shattered by uncapped open headers from high octane burning, neck wrenching, heart pounding "Studebaker Drag Races." Some of the locals who ventured out to the dragstrip for some "practice runs" were stunned at the sight of "Hot Rod Studebakers" that had invaded their local strip in what they must have thought was a time

performed a song complete with their official New Zealand Studebaker shirts.

We were privileged to be able to include a very special event on Friday morning, a Ceremonial



Photo by Gregg Shaffer.

Pat Billey, Meet Chairman (right), presents a Recognition Award to Harry Barnes, founder of SDC (left).

warp nightmare. Osceola Dragway will never be the same.

The Awards Banquet ended the day's events with the recognition of successful Concours participants, and with the number of entrants—there were many. Our national head judge, David Ridge, did a tremendous job with the total number of vehicles that were judged. As always, it was a pleasure to turn the podium over to our founder,



Photo by Gregg Shaffer.

Thanks to SDC members from North Carolina, Gilmer "Jackie" Bost was able to attend and enjoy the meet.



Photo by Gregg Shaffer.

Left: The staging area for the Saturday parade. The Newman & Altman building is in the background.

Proving Ground" in one's Studebaker can only be experienced in South Bend. We were delighted that so many of you had that opportunity and enjoyed the experience. What a way to close out a week of renewed friendship with all of the SDC members, The Antique Studebaker Club and AOA members who, together,

Mr. Harry Barnes, who addressed the crowd and shared his thoughts on what his early vision has become. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Harry who had the foresight to begin this organization.

The "rewards of patience" awaited those who planned their stay in South Bend to include The Studebaker Parade through downtown South Bend on Saturday morning. A total of 260 Studebakers, two by two, made their way from the heart of the City out to the former Studebaker Proving Ground. What a sight to see as row after row of Studebakers passed along streets that were once filled with these beauties.

The pleasure of touring "The Studebaker

The parade begins. Two hundred and sixty Studebakers rolled through the streets of South Bend. The Administration Building is at the right.

together, made the 33rd International SDC Meet the largest Meet to date.

As most of you know, the 38th International SDC Meet, which will commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Studebaker, is scheduled to return to South Bend during June 16-22, 2002. If you missed this one, start planning now to join us for this special International Meet.



Photo by James Maloney.

Attempting to thank everyone who had a part in the success of this Meet is not easy . . . the trophy sponsors, concours helpers, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, swap meet vendors, Studebaker National Museum, meet book advertisers . . . Of course, it goes without saying that someone could be accidentally overlooked.

However, in closing, I must again express my sincere appreciation to every member of The Meet Committee who stayed the course for three years of planning, meetings, late night phone calls and a tremendous amount of commitment to make this Meet a success. It has been my privilege to have served as the Meet Chairman and to have had the pleasure of working with such a dedicated group of ladies and gentleman. Thank you one and all! 📌



Photo by Gregg Shaffer.

Four Studebakers "speed" around the track at the former Studebaker Proving Ground.

Special Thanks to the following people for providing photos for this Meet Issue of *Turning Wheels*:

DAVID ARNOLD, KEN & ELEANOR BLUME, JOHN COSBY, BEE HAMLIN, BRAD KUCHAN & FRIENDS, JAMES MALONEY, DON & MARCELLA MANKAMYER, CHUCK NAUGLE, GREGG SHAFFER, AND BILL STEINMETZ. 📌



Harold Vermillion (left) and Brad Kuchan (right). Harold performed in the original Studebaker Corporation Band from 1927 to 1933. His sons, Dale and Dean, performed with the 1997 band. Brad is the director of the current Studebaker Band.

1997 Studebaker Band

SDC members again enjoyed the great numbers performed prior to Fun Night by the Studebaker Band. For many, this is one of the main highlights of the International week. Our special thanks to Brad and Jenny Kuchan for organizing this annual event.

Next year's performance will be held at the International in Austin, Texas. The practice and performance will be held on Thursday, July 2, 1998. Those interested in performing in the band in 1998 should contact Brad Kuchan at 6 Aberdeen, Bloomington IL 61704 or (309) 663-9177. 📌

THE 1997 STUDEBAKER BAND



Studebaker Band Participants

South Bend, Indiana • June 1997 • Band Director: Brad Kuchan, Illinois

Alice Barbieri, Mississippi
Larry Blyly, Michigan
John Clark, Michigan
Bruce G. Connor, Missouri
Don Connor, Missouri
Stephen Connor, Missouri
Brian Coppin, Missouri

Matt Coppin, Missouri
John Cosby, Kentucky
Robyn Crabtree, Tennessee
Dennis Day, Iowa
Gary Hallgren, New York
Hal Hermann, Virginia
Tom Hoadley, Ohio

Hezzy Kappus, Wisconsin
Don Kellogg, Washington
Jenny Kuchan, Illinois
Ray Martin, Ontario
Dan Orloff, Wisconsin
Danielle Pieper, Nebraska
Gloria Richard, Penn.

Dennis Schrimpf, Wis.
Larry Swanson, Illinois
Dale Vermillion, Oregon
Dean Vermillion, Penn.
Harold Vermillion, Indiana
Matt Wendt, Wisconsin
Marian Yerby, Illinois