

The work of many people went into this, the first SDC Quarterly-That covering the 1969 National Meet at South Bend. Eleanor Blume of the active Colorado Chapter did the cover. Don Petersen of Illinois shot almost all the photos herein. I asked Mike Elling to do a short write-up, and I ended up with a complete story; he wrote all the text unless otherwise noted. Many others have had a hand in this, with contributions or suggestions. I thank them all.

Karl Haas

South Bend - Mike Elling

South Bend residents loved us! They lined the streets as we made the motorcade from downtown out to the Proving Grounds. Their hospitality almost matches that of Dixie! During the meet many SDC'ers were tapped on the shoulder and told by one or another that they had worked on the lines or in the plant at the time their car was built. One Alabama boy came expressly with the interior door panels from his 1956 Golden Hawk, and was looking for "Betty", "Jean" and "Irene". It seems that in November of 1955, Betty, Jean and Irene, had monographed the panel along with the date and inspection stamp for the righthand door of his car. The closest he got was to the door setter who himself was wondering if anyone there had a ballpeen hammer rattling inside his door. It seems he had lost it at the time.

Avanti Motor Corporation - The Avanti Motor Corporation openhouse was really an unbelievable experience. The finest luxury and craftsmanship of any US-built car, the Avanti II is a monument to those who build and drive her. Truly, this vehicle is one of the closest examples of perfection in automotive history.

Parts Depot, Plant 8 - Like stepping from the street back into the year 1964, the Studebaker parts depot was another unbelievable experience. Studebaker appears certain to supply and resupply parts as long as there is sufficient demand. By law they must retain parts for 10 years, but they can supply for most cars back to the 1930's. It wasn't surprising that many SDC'ers were seen carting away essential components from these early years. If enough demand is made they will reprint shop and parts manuals. At least one petition was being circulated for the 1956-58 models, and several earlier ones were being considered.

Kaizer-Willys - Throbbing in the background while the meet continued, indeed while everything else is continuing, was the manufacturing of the M35A1 Military Truck in the former Studebaker plants. These heavy duty military mammoths are supplying our forces in Southeast Asia. From time to time crossing paths with us during the meet, the sight of the trucks made it apparent that there were no idle hands in the work force of the city.



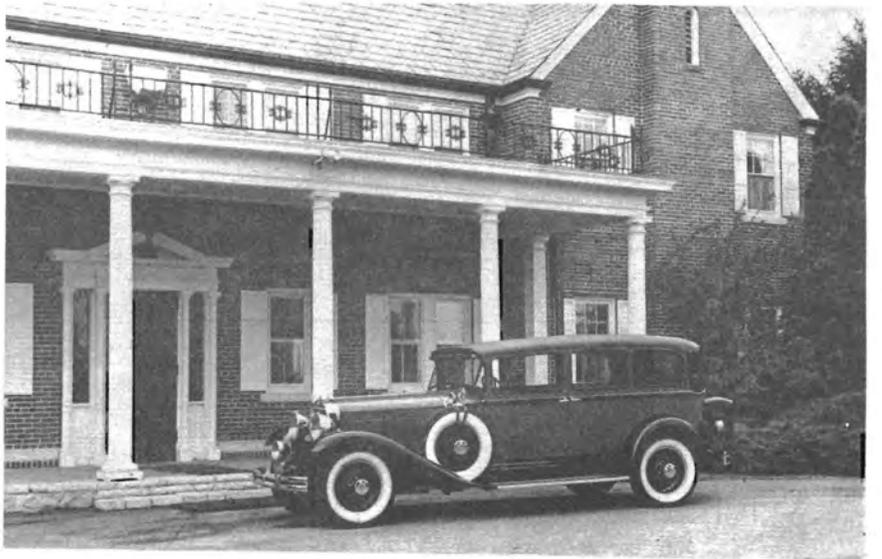
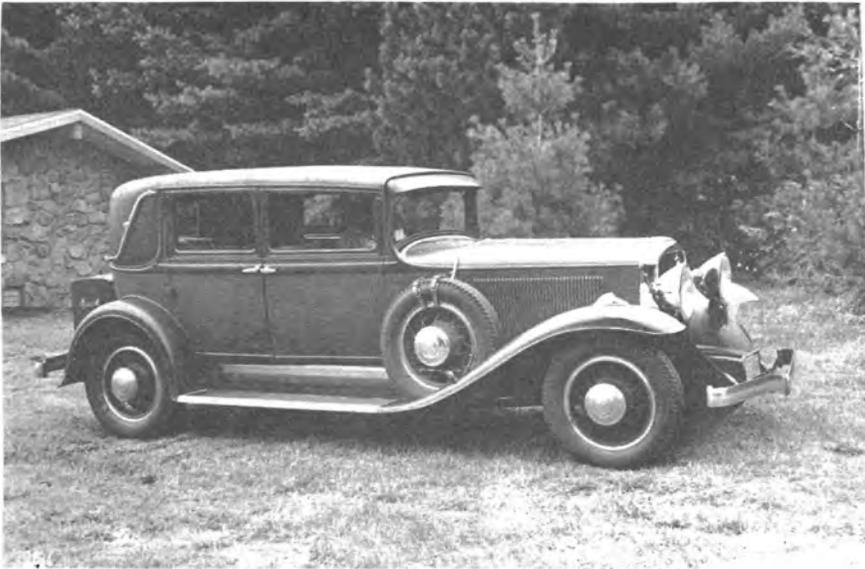
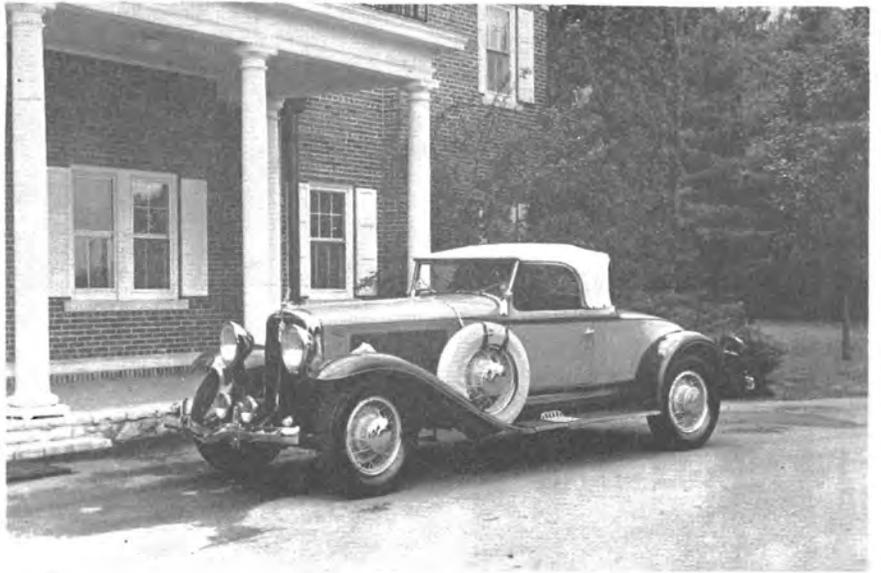
Dick Sadler's 1929 President 7 passenger
Mike Arbarchuk's 1931 President Brougham
Bob Foust's 1931 President 4 Seasons Roadster

Herb Read, Emmett Studebaker,
and Harry Barnes between Herb's
1942 President and Harry's 1938



Mr Hittle's 1924 Big 6





HOLIDAY INN-SDC HEADQUARTERS-Registration and meeting of old friends(See hard luck award for background on center photo of right-hand row)



5th Int'l. Meet - South Bend, Indiana - Michael M. Elling

An Arrival in South Bend - "I think we're in South Bend, Mike," Wallace Youngblood said. "We must have missed the city limits sign when we were looking at those Studebakers back there." "Yeah, I believe so, -- look there!" I replied looking at a Transtar van truck which passed us heading south, "This is South Bend all right." "You can tell it. There's a Studebaker behind every house." "Yes, and a new car in every garage." Our quipping was light and easy. This year's trip from Huntsville, Alabama, was made in just over 12 hours with good weather, good fortune and 3 good Studebaker machines bringing 6 of us up for the 5th International Meet, August 8-10, 1969. Besides Wally and myself in my 1962 Lark, Mrs. Marion May drove her 1957 Silver Hawk, and William I. Ridgeway, with son Ronnie and grandson Jay, drove their 1964 R-3 Avanti. The best part was that we arrived while still daylight and had some time to drive around and look at things before going to motel Headquarters. Every car lot had some kind of Studebaker or truck, and every block included a scene complete with a Studebaker.

South Bender's Know Quite A Bit - We ducked down a side street to get off the "beaten path" and "Look there's a Daytona Wagonaire for sale in that guy's front year." "Yes," I replied, stopping. "Now the best thing about a place like this is that nobody here knows what a Studebaker is really worth. I'll bet you can get it for a song," I explained to Wally very carefully.

But when we pulled up and got out, we then noticed 2 GT's with Massachusetts tags across the street. The owners were already in great debate with the Wagonaire man and Wally wound up singing his song much later back in Birmingham, Alabama. South Bender's know quite a bit about Studebakers; I'll admit that.

Don't Need to Clean Any Bugs - At the Holiday Inn Motel Headquarters, I let everybody else set up their luggage and all because we had only finished painting my 1962 Skytop Daytona the day before and had all the trim and front grille parts in the trunk. So I still had a few hours of reassembly to perform. This was one of the museum cars, and I was doing the best I knew how about it. John Brichetto, Regional Director (RD) of Tennessee, came by with his sons and asked what was the matter. I told him that if you take off all your trim and carefully place it in the trunk that you needn't clean off any bugs before showtime. (I was feeling that probably if you're going to bring a museum car, you better have it together -- or know the reason why.) John nodded and got his boys working on my trunk lid S-T-U-D-E-B-A-K-E-R letters and nameplates.

Well, the whole thing became quite a center of attraction and soon every RD and his family in town had gathered around my Lark surveying the work. One good thing about machines, they don't get self-conscious about so much attention like that.

After I was under the front end tightening the grille collar studs for awhile, a sort of cool breeze came by. Then, all the birds and kids got silent for a moment. By the time I had gotten out from being all tangled up under the front end and stood up beside my Lark, I saw everybody all ganging up around the motel entranceway. I started to trot after them, but I had to dispose of a Philips screwdriver, 3/8" open end, and a mixed up lot of pencil sketches I'd made of the trim scheme. Then, there came a picture postcard of the Indianapolis Speedway I picked up at a gas stop. I had to address it and send it to Phil Cotter in Jackson, Mississippi. By the time I made it to the crowd, I found they had blocked traffic into the whole place. It was a good thing Herb Read had chartered the motel for SDC, boy. Then Ronnie Ridgeway came by with his camera, "It's Mr. Barnes, Mike."

We Meet Mr. Harry Barnes - Everybody was following Mr. Barnes into the rear parking lot. He was driving some ancient brown sedan with 1938 headlights on it. Mr. Herb Keller, the SDC roster man, was marching ahead directing which way the automobile should go. A place was found and the automobile pulled in and stopped. The automobile almost immediately disappeared behind everybody. Soon Herb Keller got over to where we were and explained about Mr. Barnes. "...driving that '38 Commander since 4 A.M. didn't shave, didn't want to eat, didn't want to rest. That car has no power steering. The brakes feel like bricks, and at 50 miles an hour, it sounds like a truck. It's a wonder we even got here at all" Mr. Barnes was talking to people from the running board of his 1938 Commander. We stood there and watched for a long time.

Everyone's Got To Put Work In This Club - Herb Read, meet chairman had the meet pace well timed this year. It was his second straight year anyway, so nobody was worried. "I'm really worried about the club", he said Friday evening over a milkshake. We were taking his 1942 President out to the Proving Grounds for the display on Saturday. "We've got to get better use out of our own talent. We need to get more people working on our organization problems. Everybody's got to put work in this club next year."

Prangs And Wasteful Americans - The meet's most popular pair were John C. Smith and Terry Colville, from New Zealand. Everyone opened their hearts to these handsome young gentlemen from "down-under". I stopped Terry and asked him for a critical comparison. "Think a moment about us, the average Studebaker drivers of America, and compare the average New Zealander Studebaker drivers. What do you see?" - "Oh, you Americans are too wasteful," he replied. In New Zealand, whenever a thing as precious as a Studebaker is pranged, it is completely torn down bolt-by-bolt for parts..." "Excuse me, what's pranged?" - "Well, you'd call it a "bash" or a "crash". - "Okay." - "People there drive cars that have been in the same family 40 years, in many cases. In America, there appears to be more cars in salvage yards than there are on the highway. I don't think half of them in the yards need be there."



Slim LaGrange and
Ed Flaherty entering
Studebaker Museum



Ed Tozier, South Bend City Engineer
Lloyd Taylor, Harry Barnes and
Carl Farmer at museum opening

A Lump In My Throat - The first official activity of the meet was the presentation of 4 Studebaker vehicles to the new City of South Bend Historical Collection. It's in the old Administration Building, which was recently donated by Studebaker Corporation to the city. The whole thing appeared to be a big production, but I wasn't aware of anything about it other than that I had to have the Lark there at 8:30 A.M. Radio, TV, newsmen, officials, the Mayor, Studebaker executives; these were in addition to everybody else. It was a good thing I had a speech all prepared and memorized inside and out. I'm a technical writer at IBM, so that part was easy. But many of the Huntsville, Alabama members had helped me out in the last few weeks. We put in over 250 hours outfitting the Lark exactly as it came from South Bend in late 1961. The car was in good shape to begin with, but we wanted it to look as new as possible, and that took work; especially for "first timers" like us.

So I thought alot about the effort made to help me get ready for the museum. Well, I began to get this little lump in my throat about the size of a closed butterfly valve. Then while I'm up at the microphone telling a little bit about Russell Erskine, to whom my Lark was dedicated, I began to think about the effort the people in South Bend had made in designing and building the Lark. Nothing can compare to that. Then, I remembered the relatively short and simple circumstances surrounding the Lark from its shipment to Huntsville; through 2 owners before I got it, and the search for new parts and accessories. A lot of things have happened since just 1962.

It's hard to face up to it, but the lump had by that time grown to the size of an open R-2 carburetor throat. When I finished the speech, I couldn't do anything. One thing was sure. I hoped I could find a safe way back to Alabama.

Mayor Lloyd M. Allen, cut the ribbon opening the City of South Bend Studebaker Historical Collection. The dedication was the first activity of the SDC 5th International Meet and added four (4) new vehicles to the collection formerly owned by the Studebaker Corp. These four additions bring the total number of Studebaker and Studebaker related vehicles to 32.

The museum housing the Studebaker Historical Collection is the former Studebaker Corporation Administration Building located at 221 West Bronson Street. This building was also donated to the city of South Bend and is open to the public as a regular museum.

The four new additions presented to the museum include:

1951 Starlight - Ed Tozier and members of the Colorado Region of SDC.

1955 Commander - David Mann, Michigan City, Indiana

1962 Lark Skytop Daytona -Mike Elling of Alabama/Miss. Region of SDC.

1966 Studebaker - Last Canadian model, presented by the Studebaker Corporation.

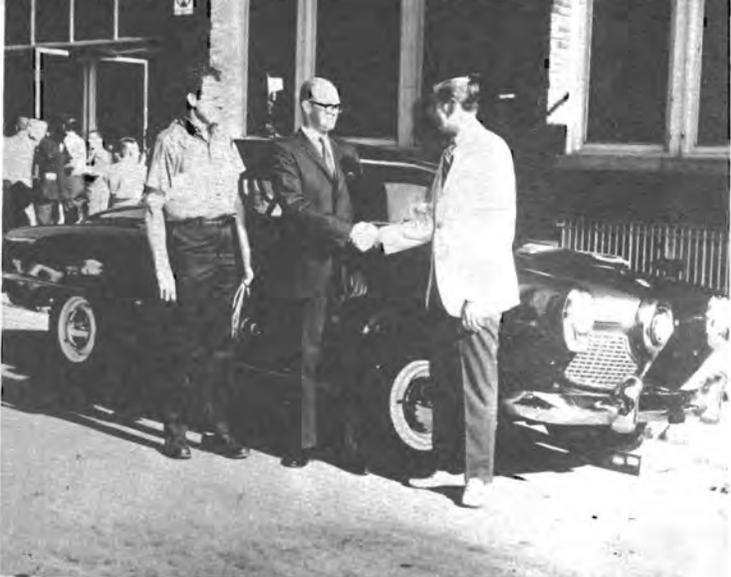
Several dignatories from the Studebaker Corporation and the City of South Bend attended the dedication. Excerpts from two speeches are quoted here as they set the mood and tone of the presentation. Mr. Byers A. Burlingame, President of Studebaker Corporation made the following comments:

"We feel that the value of these articles rests in their importance to the history of the community, the state and the nation. For this reason, Studebaker, having departed from the automotive manufacturing scene, feels that these vehicles and related items should be kept among the people who built them."

The opening statement by Mayor Lloyd M. Allen included the following expression of gratitude:

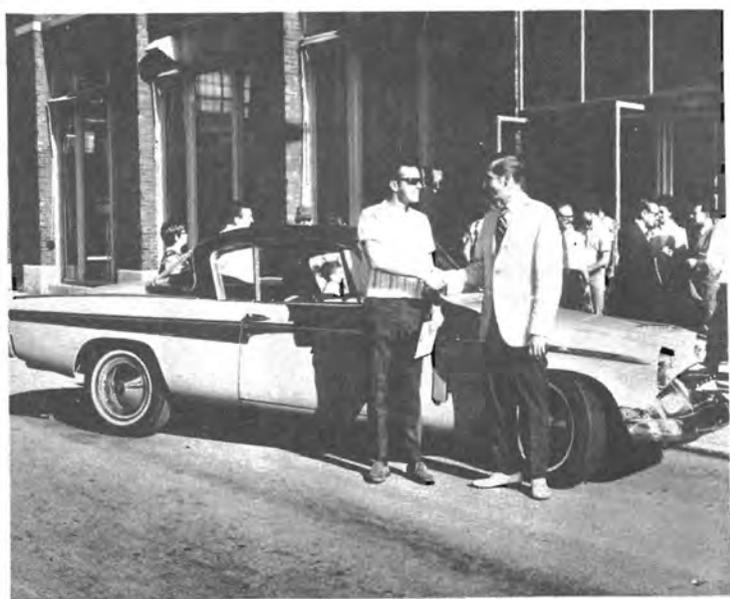
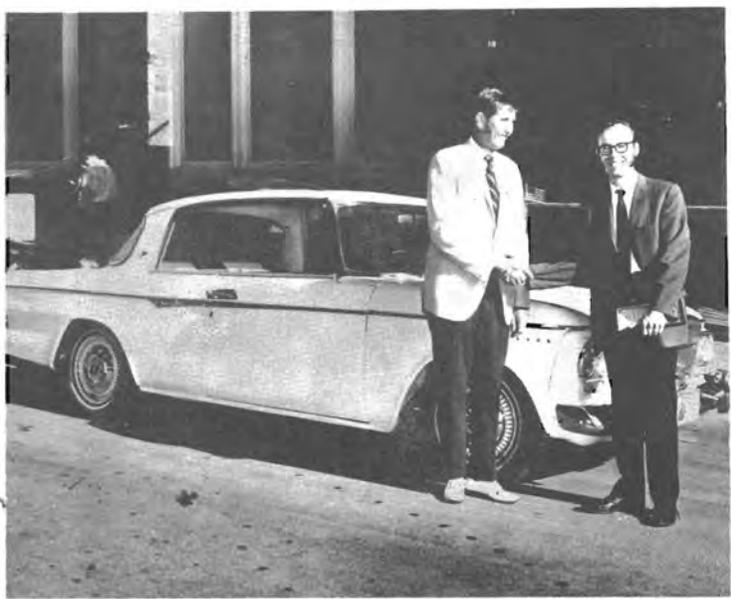
"We wish to thank the many people who have built this proud heritage, and also to thank those individuals who have so generously given of their time and efforts in the preparation of the Museum for public display."

Harry Barnes, President of SDC, replied that the museum gives the Studebaker collector a sense of "home", where he may always come to see and study Studebaker transportation history, vehicles, and the great city where they were built. Mr. Barnes enforced this thought with the following comment: - "You can be sure, Mr. Mayor, that the Studebaker Drivers Club, Inc., will do everything in its power to promote the interest and growth of this museum."



Ed Tozier and Carl Farmer presenting the SDC Colorado Chapter gift 1951 Starlight to Mayor Lloyd M. Allen of South Bend for the Studebaker Collection

Mayor Allen and Ed Dunbar, who presented the last Canadian Studebaker to the collection on behalf of Studebaker-Worthington



Mayor Allen receiving the 1962 Lark Skytop Daytona from Mike Elling

David Mann proudly presents his 1955 Commander to Mayor Allen for the Studebaker Historical Collection



Director's luncheon

