

This year, unlike previous years, I didn't see a single other Studebaker as I drove 260 miles down the Interstate highways to the International Meet. Oh well, I thought, I was too early. Other than early registration, nothing was scheduled to start until Monday morning, and here I was pulling into the Adams Mark Hotel in Indianapolis at 3 PM on Sunday afternoon. I could get unpacked and be back out in the parking lot to watch the Studebakers arrive in the evening.

Boy was I wrong. The parking lot was already full of Studebakers. I drove around the entire hotel complex to have a look. In the west side parking lot several vendors already had their swap meet spaces set up and people were shopping for goodies. I pulled up to the front door (on the east side), went inside and registered. The desk clerk told me that my room was closer to the convention center door at the west side of the hotel, so I parked as close to the west door as I could and went in. Not only was there a whole lobby full of people around the busy registration desk, there was an entire ballroom full of indoor swap meet running full blast! I wonder when the whole thing started. It was in full swing at 4 PM on Sunday afternoon. Instead of being early, I was late!

The rest of Sunday was spent shopping and renewing my yearly friendships with SDCers from all over. We later heard there were SDCers there from 45 states, many of the Canadian provinces, plus Australia, Norway and England. I didn't get to meet everyone, but I did see quite a lot of old friends and made some new ones.



Monday was officially filled with the Board of Directors meeting, and those involved spent most of the day there conducting our Club's business. For the rest, there was a Chapter Presidents Meeting in the morning, and a thriving swap meet all day both indoors and outdoors. On Monday I discovered that there were a half dozen larger vendors who had rented the hotel's meeting rooms, and each was filled with Studebaker parts and other goodies. They had been open on Sunday, too, but I hadn't found them then. One of the meeting rooms was the headquarters of the New Avanti Motor Corporation. They hadn't brought any actual cars to sell, but they got to meet a lot of SDCers, and we got to meet the new owner Mike Kelly and his key people. They plan to have two models for sale this fall, the traditional two door coupe, and a convertible. We all wish them success.

On Monday evening the Board met with the General Membership for our yearly meeting in which everyone has a chance to ask questions and make suggestions. At that meeting the SDCers from Colorado invited us all to the 1987 International Meet in Estes Park. South Bend was chosen as the site of the 1988 International Meet, and it was announced that both Pennsylvania and Texas were considering a bid to host the 1989 International Meet. That decision will be made at the 1987 General Membership Meeting, and other Chapters are still eligible to bid on it. If you are interested, ask our President Colin Fort for details on how to put in a bid.



Tuesday morning was the Editors Meeting. I always enjoy this one particularly. Of course, being an Editor, I am biased. Most of the Editors in the Club know each other because we exchange newsletters with other chapters and get to know the Editors from their writings. It is always fun to meet the person whose name you have been reading for years. It's as though we already know each other. The fact that Ron Meyer ran a great meeting was a bonus. I always learn something new I can use in TURNING WHEELS when Ron speaks.

Tuesday is traditionally the big Swap Meet day. It was here too, but Tuesday wasn't the only big swap meet day. This years swap meet must have set records for the number of days it ran, the number of vendors with different parts and goodies available, and probably, the amount of sales (although I can't prove the last one). If anyone couldn't find what they needed, it was probably because they didn't look in the right place.



Tuesday evening the National Auction proved to be one of the most entertaining parts of the entire Meet. We have a couple of SDCers who are gifted auctioneers (notably Don Noska and George Reitenour), many SDCers donate nice items to auction off (and a few silly ones), and it adds up to a fun evening. When it was all over we had raised \$1,962.00 for SDC.



The car show was held on Wednesday this year as that was the day our hosts, the Indy Chapter, had reserved the famous Indy 500 track. Even though I was there before (at the 1976 SDC International Meet), it was still a thrill just to be there. A highlight of the day was the chance to drive our Studebakers around the track. The track officials limited it to 80-100 cars at a time, and it took four groups to let all the Studebakers have a turn. We got on the track between turns 1 and 2 (mentally noting that this was the spot where Danny Sullivan spun completely around last year and still managed to win the race), and as we went around the track each new area brought back other memories of other races. The second time around we exited through the pit area. Most of us stopped in the pit of our favorite racer and took pictures. Just as in 1976 I stopped in A. J. Foyt's pit for my picture - I have always liked him because he is older than I am and is still actively racing.



We were again lucky to have great weather - sunny and perfect for picture taking. I did notice it was pretty hot, but that is to be expected in the Midwest in mid-July. That evening the local 6 o'clock TV news said it was the hottest day in Indiana in three years. They even mentioned the last day that was hotter. It was in July 1983. Funny thing, it was the exact day of our concours at South Bend '83, the now famous 102 degree day. Indy 1986 was not that hot, staying down in the 90's. South Bend keeps the record.

The Indy Chapter in a very unselfish gesture, guaranteed that there would be no "home field advantage" in the concours. They did not enter any of their own cars in the judging. Chief Judge George Reitenour during the spring had trained a group of his friends from the Chevy club in the fine points of Studebaker judging, so all the Studebaker judging was done by unbiased Chevy enthusiasts, except for authenticity which was handled by Studebaker persons. It was quite a surprise to see a whole row of vintage Chevys at the SDC concours, but their owners turned out to be pretty nice guys. Thanks, Chevy people!



The one division the Chevy judges did not judge was the Avanti division. It was judged by a blue-ribbon panel of Avanti experts from SDC plus Mike Kelly, the new owner of Avanti. They had quite a job in the 1963 Avanti class as there were an unusually large number of unusually nice cars. The trophy winners this year in the 1963 Avanti class can take special pride in their awards as they survived a lot of really tough competition.

After cleaning up back at the hotel, Wednesday evening was Fun Night. This year the Indy Chapter had a theme party that was a lot of fun. It was a "Roaring 20's" party, complete with music, dancers, and a costume contest. At least a third of the SDCers attended in costume and many were quite elaborate. A good time was had by all.



Thursday morning was the time to show the model cars, Studebaker watches, and other memorabilia. These displays have grown both in quantity and quality over the years and the competition for awards is getting to be as tough as the concours.

In adjoining rooms the swap meet continued another day, and people still were buying. I know because I was still buying and selling myself on Thursday, and I wasn't alone. The Zone Coordinators and Regional Directors met during the afternoon, but that was one I missed so I can't report on their meeting.



Thursday evening was the Awards Banquet. As usual, some of the SDCers in attendance had already started for home, but over 400 stayed for the final festivities. After dinner the various awards were given out. The Harold E. Churchill Award for literary contributions to TURNING WHEELS was given to Earle Haley, with a special runner-up citation to Terry Judd. The Chapter Publication Committee Awards were announced by Rich Holcomb. (The winners have already been printed in TURNING WHEELS on page 11 in the September issue).

Chief Judge George Reitenour started off the concours awards at a brisk pace, and finished passing out all the car trophies in a record low 47 minutes. Congratulations to all the winners.

A special award was presented to our outgoing President Stu Chapman for his two years of service to SDC. We would like to add our thanks to Stu for a job well done, and to the Indy Chapter for a meet well run! See you all next July in Estes Park, Colorado. I wouldn't miss it if I were you.