

Charlotte - What Southern Hospitality is All About

by Ed Skomoroh, International Meet Chair

Sunday, June 6, 2004, was the kickoff day and the large membership crowd arrived for a week of fun and activities. Our indoor vendors got a jump-start in setting up and they were open for business early Sunday afternoon. The North Carolina Chapter was ready for the Sunday pre-registrations and everything moved quickly and efficiently. The automated walk-in registration allowed members to quickly register on site and they processed 114 walk-ins for the week.

Charlotte was one of the few international meets where we had AOAI and ASC join SDC in officially naming the Adams Mark host hotel as the meet headquarters. It was great to see all of these Studebaker clubs at one location joining us for a week of fun and fellowship. This international event included members from all over United States, Canada, Australia, Netherlands, Sweden, and United Kingdom. We were

pleased that so many of our international members made the long trip to join us.

Our general registration was 695 and, in saying this, it was one of the larger international meets. We had more than 1,700 registered membership attendees and it was estimated that altogether we had approximately 2,200 attendees.

It was a pleasure to hear from the concours judges and the chief judge how well the concours field had been arranged. It was well organized and efficiently laid out by the NC chapter and had such amenities as grass, trees and shade. The judged/displayed vehicles were in the same area in their appropriate divisions, making it easy for spectators to view all the fine Studebaker classics. In total there were 208 concours, and 117 display registrations.

The Welcome Gala on Monday night was a new event. Sponsored by SDC, and free including snacks, it was the kick-off to the week's activities.

Attendance was great with more than 550 attending. This tells us that if we have an event for Monday night they will come. The membership was introduced to the SDC board, the NC chapter chairs, and updated on the week's events and any last minute changes. Through the efforts of the NC chapter the membership was entertained by very professional clog dancers of all ages. It was evident that the crowd appreciated this sort of entertainment just from the applause and a standing ovation. This event also served as an icebreaker and allowed members to get acquainted with old and new friends.

A new event on Tuesday night was the **Spokane Hospitality Night**. The purpose of this event was to meet and greet the Spokane co-chairs, Dan Brown, David Kirby and some of their committee. The attendance was overwhelming; the room was packed all evening with the membership being treated to free snacks and fresh smoked salmon delivered by Dan Brown all the way from Spokane. Free refreshments such as beer and wine were available along with the Spokane folks highlighting some of the great events that would be available in Spokane. This event was such a success that it will be repeated in Spokane with the Omaha Chapter hosting a Hospitality Night.

The **Wednesday Auction** was well attended and SDC broke a record with Charlotte having the highest revenue to date. This certainly could not have been attained had it not been for our volunteer Auctioneer, Lanny McNabb, who not only did an excellent job, but also personally donated one of his collector Winchester rifles, which brought in the highest sale.



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

North Carolina Chapter Co-Chairs, Jack White, left, and David Hauser address the crowd at the Welcome Gala.



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

The SDC directors were introduced at the Welcome Gala. Left, seated, Harry Crosson, and standing, Stu Chapman.



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

Clog dancers entertained the large crowd and received a standing ovation at The Welcome Gala.

Another new event introduced by the NC Chapter was the **Valve Cover Racing**. This event drew a lot of spectators and racers. For only a few dollars you could purchase an old skateboard and an old six or eight cylinder Studebaker valve cover, install the cover on the skateboard and you were in the races. This is an excellent father and son event. Dad is the sponsor and the child goes racing. To cap it off, the NC chapter presented trophies to the winners. The SDC IM committee has decided that this is a great event to involve our young Studebaker members and we understand that Spokane is going to continue with this event. What a blast!

Fun Night took on a different format than in past years. Instead of being entertained by a band and dancing, the attendees' motor skills were challenged. The theme was NASCAR. Members had the opportunity to test their skills in front of the terminals in virtual auto racing. Others tested their skills in tossing a valve lifter into an oil pan. And then there was the remote circular car racing along with pit stop tire changing. Interestingly enough, some of the ladies made the macho guys' times look bad. The winners were allowed to select their own prizes, which were exceptional.

The Avanti Owners' Association International, Inc. (AOAI) contributed to the SDC international meet by



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE



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Valve Cover Racing was a big hit. This was a real family event, and various methods were used to line up the racers (top, left and right). The green flag goes down and they're off! (left). Valve cover racers with their valve covers (right).



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

At Thursday's Fun Night, the theme was NASCAR, with virtual auto racing (top), and remote circular car racing (above), including pit stop tire changing.

having an excellent guest speaker, Laurence Loewy, daughter of the famous Raymond Loewy, at their Thursday dinner event.

Friday night's **Awards Banquet** was also a sellout. Our professional photographer, Ken Buckner of PHOTOLINE, with the assistance of Mark Wheeler of Cornerstone Registrations, did an excellent computer

slideshow presentation of all the winners of the concours, providing such details as the winner's name, state, and division. During the week Ken also made available the opportunity for members to purchase a color photo of their Studebaker. We plan to have all the photos of the Charlotte event on an on-line photo album in the near future on our website: www.sdcmeet.com. Members will be able to view the Studebakers and purchase any photos they wish from Photoline. We will keep you posted.

When viewing the attendees at the Charlotte meet, it was evident this was not a "men only" crowd. The ladies were very present and took part in many of the ladies-orientated seminars, such as quilting, self defense, and others. There were events for the ladies, such as shopping trips and the Ladies' Tea and Southern Style Fashion Show. Since Charlotte is not your normal vacation destination, the membership took advantage of all the tours available and more than 1,100 booked tours. This certainly is a record. The membership was treated to viewing some extremely beautifully restored and altered Studebaker and Avanti vehicles. The Coke Truck was one of the vehicles that drew a lot of attention and comments. It was an exceptional restoration.

On behalf of the IM committee and SDC, I want to thank the North Carolina chapter, co-chairs Jack White and David Hauser, and all the volunteers who donated

their time to make this a successful meet. The event certainly could not have been as successful had it not been for the folks who volunteered their time to conduct the many excellent seminars. Also, a special thanks to Jim Geary for setting up the Toy and Memorabilia

Room. This feature continues to draw more and more interest each year.

Don't forget to mark your calendar for **Spokane 2005, August 14-19**. For more information or to register on-line, go to our website: www.sdcmeet.com.

The Ladies' Tea and Southern Style Fashion Show



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

The ladies, in period costumes, were announced at the door and then escorted by: (left to right) Clement Studebaker", "The Confederate Army Officer", or "Henry Studebaker".



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

The event was sold out, with about 90 ladies attending. The period costumes were provided by Dottie Mae Groves of Dottie Mae's Costumes of Kansas City, Kansas.



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

The Studebaker band provided entertainment on Thursday.



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

Clement Studebaker (Richard Dormois) was kept busy accompanying ladies to their tables.



Photo by Ken Buckner, PHOTOLINE

The Confederate Army Officer (Gene Sunding), escorts a southern belle to her table.