

Lancaster 2008 – Looking Back

by Don Jones (aka John Clement Studebaker at Lancaster)

I am sure most of us have seen the great movie “Field of Dreams” starring Kevin Costner. Do you remember the line “Build it and they will come”? Yes, I know you do. Just like the movie, Keystone Region Chapter, led by Chair Denny Foust and Co-Chair Nancy Pfahler, along with their team of volunteers built the International Meet and “they” came. Two years of planning and effort by many Keystone members resulted in an International Meet that will rank in the minds of many SDC members as one of the best on record and one that rivals the 1980 Meet held in Gettysburg 28 years earlier.

Some of the comments heard are similar to that heard from Jim Quigley from “down under” in Australia. Jim stated: *“Lancaster was my 15th SDC International Meet since Colorado Springs in 1973 and I enjoyed it so much that I would rank it in my top three of those attended meets. Great weather, location and friendliness along with the smooth running are reasons why Lancaster memories will remain clearly in my mind. A big thanks to all the organizing committees.”*

Another note came from SDC members Mr. and Mrs. Bob Barrick of Dunnville, Ontario, who offered another perspective on just one of the many events held throughout the week. They simply said: *“We had an excellent time, especially Friday’s poker run. Job well done. Thanks!”*

I am sure there are many more comments and thoughts from the meet. Maybe they surround the new friends you’ve made. Or perhaps they come from the vehicles you saw on the concours field where there were many rarely seen Studebaker beauties. One thing I believe is that we all took away many memories from this meet.

Friday before the beginning of the 44th Annual International Meet, the Keystone Meet

Committee gathered in Lancaster to set up the registration area, begin the layout of the Swap Meet and to prepare the 798 registration packets for those who had pre-registered for the meet. Joining the Keystone crew were IMC Chairman Richard Dornois, Heidi and Ed Reynolds, and Mark and Jen Wheeler from Cornerstone Registration. By noon on Saturday the packets were finished, a few vendors were setting up in the Expo Center and preparations were almost complete. Mark Wheeler of Cornerstone Registration remarked.

“Are we done? We’re never done before midnight on the day before. What are we going to do until tomorrow?” Our reply was to tell him to go relax and be prepared for tomorrow as it was now on to the Meet.



photo by Evan Severson

Sunday came bright and early with Keystoners gathering in the registration area prepared for the tasks at hand. Studebakers were placed in the grass, along the Lincoln Highway denoting the Meet site, encouraging the general public to slow their pace and wonder what the invasion of Studebakers was all about. Keystone’s Concours volunteers went on to line the Concours Field in the hot muggy sun. Others got the items at the registration table ready and as 9:00 a.m. approached, the doors were unlocked, the meet began.

Organized chaos seemed the name of the game but it was handled in great form. All of the efforts put into planning were paying off. Minimal errors were found in the registration packets while the lining of the Concours Field was completed without a hitch and in less than the anticipated time. What had we forgotten? What were we facing? It seemed too good to be true as all activity in the registration area was going very smoothly.



photo by Dianne Schlott

Mark and Jen Wheeler, along with Don Jones discuss assembly of meet packets Friday night with meet chair Denny Foust, Tom Pfahler and Cindy Foust.”



photo by Dianne Schlott

Gary Hearn's Studebaker wagon was displayed during the meet, along with other members' vehicles to attract onlookers during the week of the meet.

Meanwhile down at the Expo Center, vendors continued to arrive and the setup continued at a furious pace while attendees started shopping, carrying away their new found "booty."

Along about mid-afternoon Gary Hearn arrived with his precious cargo of Studebaker horse-drawn vehicles and we promptly unloaded and put them in place. His farm wagon joined the Studebakers displayed along the road while his carriage was placed in the registration area as its centerpiece.

SDC members were in a great mood as they arrived to register and remarked how well we handled all of the things that were happening, seemingly all at one time. As the day came to a close the meet committee wiped their collective brow and noted we had gotten through the day pretty much unscathed.

Monday was soon upon us and as the sun rose in the east it gave a clear indication of the weather for the week, as it was a beautiful day. Registration opened early as Keystoneers wanted to accommodate the crowd that was waiting. The Swap Meet was open and thriving with the shuttle service being provided by Keystone members to and from the Expo Center.

Keystone member Norm Getz wore a smile all week as he happily transported members to and from the Expo Center. Here, he is transporting members Ruth & Jack Cooper back to the Host from the swap meet.



photo by Dianne Schlott

Local historian Charles Glatfelter discusses the early history of Studebaker in Adams County as part of the rededication ceremonies at the Studebaker Marker site on Monday, as participants in the ceremony look on.



photo by Dianne Schlott

The first tour of the week left at 8:15 a.m., taking those on board the bus back in time to the plain and simple days of the Amish people. Can you believe it? The SDC Board Meeting started on time in the Marietta Room and no one was lost in the vast reaches of the Host Resort's meeting rooms. Registration continued without any major obstacles for those at the table to address. Sales of meet merchandise were brisk with the meet pin being a big hit as well as our T-shirts and hats.

Many stopped at the Studebaker Museum's table as well as that of the Studebaker National Foundation. The Antique Studebaker Club and the Avanti Owners Association were also open for business. By noon it was time to gather those going to the monument re-dedication in Adams County. Soon the bus was loaded and

John Clement Studebaker arrived, boarded the bus and those on board were whisked away for a leisurely hour's ride to his homestead. Did you go? If you didn't, you missed a great afternoon.

The ceremony was a moving affair with participants from the township, county, historical society and others on hand. It was an informative ceremony and when completed, light refreshments were served. The attendees returned to the Host for the much anticipated, first ever, Welcome Night Buffet provided by the Studebaker Drivers Club national organization.. Over 1,200 people attended this event of camaraderic, music and fun. It was, by far, the largest Welcome Night celebration ever held at an International Meet. When it was over the meet committee looked at each other and promptly

collapsed as the second day was done. By the way, the weather for the day was above reproach and all indications predicted that the best was yet to come.

Tuesday was another day of organized chaos at the registration table, starting sharply at 8:00 a.m.. Tours began at 9:00 a.m., with first tour off to Hershey and area attractions including the AACA Museum. Did you go? Did you see the special Studebaker display that had been assembled for the meet? Did you note it told the Studebaker story from the horse-drawn days to the end of South Bend production? Did you see the EMF and Erskine roadster that were included?

Back in Lancaster, seminars and meetings were in full swing with SDC, AOAI and ASC members scurrying everywhere. As a side note the Studebakers on display along the road and those in the parking lots were beginning to draw the public to the site and many tourists and locals could be seen roaming the grounds, discussing the cars, taking pictures and talking to meet attendees. Did you talk to some of these curious families and individuals? I sure hope you did, as it was a blast with comments like "I didn't know there were so many Studebakers around." The last event for the day was the General SDC Membership Meeting held in record time and followed by a lot of talking, walking the parking lots and just plain visiting amongst those in attendance.

Wednesday was another great day with registration starting at 8:00 a.m. or earlier and tours off across the area at 6:45 a.m.. Did you go on the Harley-Davidson tour? What an event and how fortunate we were to be able to book an opening for it. This was a tour that we booked very early in the planning to make sure we could provide it. Events within the hotel were also in full swing, as was the shuttle to and from the Swap Meet at the Expo Center provided by willing Keystone volunteers. Sales there were brisk with many bargains being found and parts changing hands.

Did you visit this 50,000 square foot facility? Did you see Frank McCarthy, Keystone's venerable Swap Meet Chair and his staff managing the show in their usu-



photo by Dianne Schlott

Part of the great Swap Meet area at the Expo Center. Vendors were treated to an air-conditioned facility all week long. Can you find yourself in the crowd?

ally great manner? I understand Frank was the traffic cop directing the hordes of people who were there in and out and to the vendors they were seeking.

The day seemed to go by rapidly and as it wound down, the Concours Committee met and decided to open the Concours Field to all the Concours cars in preparation for the next day's premier event. This decision proved to be a prudent one as over 200 cars were placed on the field Wednesday night up until 9:00 p.m., and clearly defined all the Divisions on the field. The evening featured the great Studebaker Band making its first appearance of the week, and the annual SDC Auction which was a huge success attended by several hundred meet attendees.

Thursday morning at 5:30 a.m., before the sun rose, over 30 Keystoners and a few additional volunteers gathered in the lobby of the Host to prepare for the Concours. Instructions to the many volunteers were given and the crews moved out as cars were arriving. The operation for the day was to place all the cars properly by division and it went flawlessly, with all vehicles in place by 10:15 a.m.. Fewer than 10 vehicles had to be repositioned in other divisions. Over 470 cars graced the field on this absolutely gorgeous day. The slight breeze made it a perfect weather day.

Margie Bergey, shown with Don Jones as John and Rebecca Mohler Studebaker. We lost Margie, wife of longtime SDC, Delaware Valley and Keystone member Dennis Bergey just three weeks after the Lancaster meet. One of Margie's lifetime goals was to attend an SDC International Meet which she accomplished at Lancaster. Our condolences go out to the family of Margie.



photo by Dianne Schlott

Keystone is known for establishing International Meet "Firsts", and this day was no exception, as Day-of-Show registration, and movement of the registration to the outside, was the order of the day. This again

proved to be a great move as those who were already pre-registered were given their packets and sent directly to the Concours field, thereby keeping the flow of vehicles into the Host moving rapidly. At the same time,



photo submitted by Duane Miller and Linda Miller

Learning about the history and customs of the Amish during the "Plain & Simple" tour.



photo submitted by Duane Miller and Linda Miller

Browsing through a colorful display of handmade quilts and country crafts during the "Plain and Simple" tour.



photo submitted by Duane Miller and Linda Miller

SDC members Mark and Val Carson from British Columbia enjoying the Harley-Davidson factory tour.



photo by Dianne Schlott

A large group attended the Ladies' Luncheon and the discussion by Rachel Pellman.

we also were able to register an additional 7 vehicles for the show. At 9:00 a.m. the general public began to stream onto the Host grounds and before the day was over, the approximate count exceeded 8,500 persons in attendance. This portion of the day ended successfully around 4:00 p.m.

At noon, the Ladies Luncheon got underway with at least 85 ladies in attendance, including the renowned Re-

becca Studebaker (Margie Bergey) in period dress.

Prior to the meet, IMC Chair Richard Dormois and Keystone Co-Chair Nancy Pfahler made a bet. Richard wagered that fewer than 60 ladies would attend, while Nancy suggested that the room would be full with a maximum crowd. Want to guess who won? All in attendance had a great time and enjoyed the special speaker, Rachel Pellman.

Thursday evening activities began at 7:00 p.m. when Fun Night activities got underway. Former SDC National President Max Corkins and his band "noEZway" provided music for the evening.

In 1980, Keystone established SDC Meet tradition of Fun Night when it held the first one. This year they continued that tradition by announcing that the Rockvale Outlets Mall had stepped up and become the first ever

Fun Night corporate sponsor, which just added to the activities of the night. Music, games and dancing continued until midnight with many prizes handed out and awarded throughout the evening. At 11:00 the Grand Prize of the evening was awarded. You weren't there? Don't know what the prize was? Well it was a 32" HD Plasma TV won by an SDC member from Maryland.

Did you ride the trolley to the Rockvale Outlet Center? It was enormously popular with attendees. In addition to their sponsorship of Fun Night, the owners of Rockvale Outlet Centers (SDC members) provided this transportation, off-site parking and a place to wash and prepare cars for the Concours. In addition, many of the merchants at the Outlets Center provided the door prizes and awards for Fun Night. We hope you took advantage of the many discount coupons that Rockvale provided for attendees' use.

As normally is the tradition at International Meets, Friday was a relaxed day with activities that included several tours, one of which went to the Brandywine area of Pennsylvania. The first ever International Meet Poker Run got underway at 9:00 a.m. with over 30 participants. Yes, this was another Keystone first for an International Meet. The run took members through all of eastern Lancaster County with the final stop being at

photo by Dianne Schlott



Left: Former national president, Max Corkins performs with his band noEZway during Fun Night as (right) part of the large crowd at Fun Night enjoys one of the many activities that were on each table.

photo by Dianne Schlott





Just part of the large concours area display as seen from the helicopter.

photo by Gary Hearn



photo by Ann Turner

Patrick Foster addressing the SDC banquet.

the Rebecca Mohler homestead just outside of Ephrata, Pennsylvania. When participants arrived there, they met the current owners of the home and “John Clement and Rebecca Studebaker”. The “Studebakers” had been present at the meet throughout the week, meeting and greeting meet attendees and their families. Many tour members even received guided tours of the home that is a step back in time. When the Poker Run ended, all who participated gathered at the Host and prizes were awarded based on the value of their poker hand. All in all, it was a very enjoyable day.

Friday evening events started at 6:00 p.m. with a social hour followed by the annual Awards Banquet attended by 850 individuals with another 150 or more slipping in as the awards ceremony was about to begin. Those

in attendance were treated to an impactful speech by renowned independent auto author Patrick Foster (*below, left*) who had been in attendance at the meet for most of the week. Pat was the special guest of Keystone Region Chapter and had the opportunity to speak to many SDC members. The event ended the activities for the day and was over by 10:00 p.m., just as it was scheduled to be. Thus the 44th Annual International Meet came to an end.

The success of the meet is in the eye of the beholder. Here are a few more comments from those who attended.

Joe Roberts, Fayetteville, NC, had this to say about his time in Lancaster: “*The Lancaster Meet was fantastic. My wife and I really had a good time. The Keystone folks were very helpful and always with a smile on their faces. The tours we went on were wonderful. Well planned and carried out. Thanks for everything.*”

Leonard Shepherd, Richmond, VA said: “*Lancaster was one of the best Studebaker meets that I have attended. The weather cooperated and since I now know Studebaker people on the forum, I thoroughly enjoyed myself.*”

Roger Price, Smithtown, NY, and his wife stated the following: “*The Lancaster meet was one of the best Internationals we’ve ever attended. Everything seemed to run smoothly and on time. I particularly enjoyed the Welcome Night. Thank you for providing, at no cost to us, the food for the night. I’ve not seen that at any of the Internationals I’ve attended. The weather was perfect and the people great. Thank you to all the Keystone Chapter members who did such a terrific job. It’s not easy putting on an event such as this.*”

In summary, the Keystone Chapter thanks all those who attended this meet. The two-year planning effort was just a formula for success as were the sacrifices made by those who were involved in it. In the end it was all worth it as it was done for the enjoyment of all.

“*See you in the future as I write about our past.*”

Don Jones