

The ECHO



Newsletter of the
Grand Canyon State Chapter
Studebaker Drivers Club

Volume 50 Issue 7

2021 Golden Quill Winner

July/August 2022

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*Happy
Summer!*



Smart way to go places! Smart car to buy!

1955 STUDEBAKER

Luxury cars! Priced with the lowest!



Studebaker wins 1955 Travel and Auto Sports Show Gold Cup at Madison Square Garden—one of 36 International Awards for excellence of design.

GO PLACES with pride this summer in this excitingly speedlined car that's going places fast . . . the automobile world's outstanding honor winner . . . the far-advanced 1955 Studebaker!

You never drove a car with anything like the thrill of Studebaker's zooming new power. It sweeps you from a standing start to highway speed in just scant seconds.

You feel completely safe as you click off the miles. Studebaker's low-slung road design holds the car steady and secure even on the sharpest turns.

You can have your choice of three great Studebaker engines . . . the President V-8 . . . the Commander V-8—winner of the Mobilgas Economy Run . . . the Champion 6. And you find colorful Studebaker body styles galore—luxurious sedans—capacious station wagons—sports coupes and hard-tops.

Go to your nearby Studebaker dealer's now . . . go out for an unforgettable trial drive . . . and then see how little a Studebaker costs. You can get an award-winning Studebaker V-8 or 6 at prices right down with the lowest.



Studebaker wins 1955 Grand Sweepstakes in Mobilgas Economy Run—the second straight year of triumph for Studebaker—America's No. 1 Economy Car.

Studebaker . . . so much better made . . . worth more when you trade!



See Studebaker-Packard's TV Reader's Digest—a weekly feature on ABC-TV network

STUDEBAKER DIVISION OF STUDEBAKER-PACKARD CORPORATION . . . ONE OF THE 4 MAJOR FULL-LINE PRODUCERS OF CARS AND TRUCKS

From the Editor's Pen

The Chapter vice-president Richard Dormois sent a very nice article about the Chapter's visit to the Tempe History Museum in May. Your editor pulled out the section about the Minder Binder's water wagon to feature separately. Long time Valley residents will likely remember this wagon parked on McClintock for many years until the restaurant closed in 2005. This wagon is very similar to Studebaker's version of the water wagon or sprinkler and many existing examples can be seen on the internet with a little searching. I hope featuring it will pique your interest to find out more about this most useful and unique vehicle.

Thanks to Richard and the other contributors to this issue: Michell Eastburn, Dan Kuhl, Scott Grainger, Steve Fein, Jerry Blount and Dee Gruver.

Please send your submissions for the September issue by August 25th.

Think Studebaker! Chris



Let us temper our criticism with kindness. None of us comes fully equipped. Carl Sagan

Reminder: To be a member of the GCSC you must be a member of the Studebaker Drivers Club. If your SDC dues are not current, please visit <https://sdc.cornerstonereg.com/> to renew. Dues are \$36.00 for one year, \$99.00 for three years or \$161.00 for five years. If you no longer wish to receive *Turning Wheels*, there is a membership option without the magazine at \$12.00 per year.

CHAPTER NAME BADGE

Order your Chapter name badge with a pin back by contacting Chris Collins at ccollinsaz@cox.net or 602-995-2146. The price is \$5.00 each.

If you wish to have a magnet back on your badge, the price is \$6.00 each.

The name badges are available in the traditional brass and black with the SDC logo or a blue plastic with the Chapter logo.



The ECHO is the official newsletter of the Grand Canyon State Chapter, SDC and is published 11 times per year. Contributions are welcome and encouraged. Please submit articles, tech tips, etc. by the 20th of the month preceding publication. Other newsletter editors are welcome to use any material with proper credit given.

GRAND CANYON STATE CHAPTER OFFICERS AND BOARD 2022

President

Michell Eastburn
6314 W. Fillmore St.
Phoenix, AZ 85043
602-803-1359
michell.eastburn@asu.edu

Vice President

Peggy Eastburn
6314 W. Fillmore St.
Phoenix, AZ 85043
623-936-6116
peggyeastburn@hotmail.com

Secretary

Richard Dormois
PO Box 596
Mesa, AZ 85211
702-461-3679
1938studeman@earthlink.net

Treasurer

John Rodhouse
1816 N. Dakota St.
Chandler, AZ 85251
480-244-3763
jrodhouse@hotmail.com

Board Members

Dennis Lynde
304 E. Hackamore
Mesa, AZ 85201
480-898-3425
dlynde012@aol.com

Kent Musgrave
3850 E. Huber St. #3
Mesa, AZ 85206
480-250-1223
professor_km@cox.net

Sharon Ware
2700 E. Magnolia Dr.
Gilbert, AZ 85298
480-209-9328
skware63@gmail.com

ECHO Editor/Membership

Chris Collins
2410 W. Freeway Lane
Phoenix, AZ 85021
602-995-2146
ccollinsaz@cox.net

Chapter Historian: Peggy Eastburn 623-936-6116 peggyeastburn@hotmail.com

Webmaster: Kent Musgrave professor_km@cox.net **Chapter Website:** <https://www.grandcanyonsgdc.com>

Facebook: Studebakers Grand Canyon State Chapter Administrators: Linda Smith, Sharon Ware

Pacific Southwest Zone

Regional Manager/Ariz.	Chris Collins	2410 W. Freeway Ln., Phoenix, AZ 85021	ccollinsaz@cox.net
Zone Coordinator	Dan Scott	25731 Palermo Ct., Murrieta, CA 92563	dansct@sbcglobal.net
National Director	Ed Smith	P.O. Box 90763, White Mountain Lake, AZ 85912	edcollects@gmail.com

SDC National Officers 2021-2023

President	Denny Foust	143 Studebaker Rd., Spring Mills, PA 16875	studeguy54@gmail.com
Vice President	Don Jones	P.O. Box 299, Concord, VA 24516	keydetsdj@aol.com
Secretary	Cindy Foust	143 Studebaker Rd., Spring Mills, PA 16875	cfoust1966@gmail.com
Treasurer	Jane Stinson	5800 Stanley Rd., Columbiaville, MI 48421	jestinson@aol.com

STATE OF THE CHAPTER

By Michell Eastburn, President



Y up, it's summertime here in the great Valley of the Sun, at least it's a dry heat though, right?!?!

Keep in mind that the summer months are the best times for road construction. Please slow in work zones and remember that everyone wants to get to their destination whether it be vacation or simply home after a day of work. As a highway/road worker myself I know just how dangerous it is to be working to better the roads with civilian traffic zooming at my back. We all know that driving is a privilege and also a responsibility, so please make sure that you are responsible for your privileges.

"ADOT echoes the summer road trip safety recommendation, especially as we look ahead to the Fourth of July and Labor Day holiday weekends. Plan ahead, pack an emergency prep kit, check your vehicle for things such as tire pressure and condition. Don't forget extra drinking water and other items that can help if an unscheduled stop in traffic occurs. Expect the unexpected, even if that includes a "gator." " [Source: <https://azdot.gov/adot-blog/hot-weather-means-more-%E2%80%9Cgators%E2%80%9D-showing-arizona%E2%80%99s-highways>]

Stay safe out there on the roads, whether it be in a Studebaker or other vehicle.

Hope to see you all in a few days at Organ Stop Pizza on Sunday, July 10th. We are still planning a fun filled event for International Drive Your Studebaker Day in September, let us know if you have any ideas for 'cool' places to go.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, the 2023 PSW Zone Meet endeavors need to get rolling. The Chapter seemed excited in January, and we need that excitement to step-up and start planning. A committee will need to be created to start working on location, promotions, activities, tours and funds. Lots of work has been started from the 2020 Zone Meet, so we aren't starting from scratch, but it will still need some time and love.



MINDER BINDERS WAGON

Article & Photo By Richard Dormois

Minder Binders at McClintock and University in Tempe was known for its cheap burgers and drinks and a fine array of antiques. The iconic sign in front was an authentic street cleaning water wagon. The business closed in 2005 with the weathered wagon in sad repair. It was restored to its present condition in 2014 by the Morgan Carriage Works in Oak View, California and stands as a sentry at the Tempe History Museum entrance. Upon close examination, I could find no markings or identity as to the manufacturer. Although a fine vehicle for the secure transport of water, it is surely not of Studebaker origin.

GRAND CANYON STATE CHAPTER
Celebrates 50th Anniversary
1972 - 2022

In December, the Chapter will have an official celebration of its 50th Anniversary. If you have any reminisces and/or memorabilia you'd like to share at the event or with the board, please let a board member know. Items you might share include photos, t-shirts and other items from the past.

Thoughts and Well Wishes to

Bill Eastburn	Gary Keating
Paulette Fein	Sandie Keating
Jim Nereau	
Mary Powell-McConnell	
Rosalie Torske	



STREETSIDE CLASSICS

A few clouds made the morning of June 18th at Streetside Classics a bit more bearable. Several Chapter members and their Studes (and a Dodge) gathered on the west side of the building in the shade for a nice little cruise-in and short general membership meeting. Members then moseyed on for a self-guided tour of all the cars, trucks, and unique vehicles inside the venue while enjoying a light breakfast of fruits and pastries. Thank you to all those that joined to celebrate our Fathers and Graduates. Thank you to Domenica and Gwen Eastburn for helping set-up and break-down.

Joining in the summer activity were Will, Maryanne, Domenica, Felicia and Gwen Eastburn, 1949 C Cab 4X4; George Gezelius, 1951 Champion; Dennis Lynde, 1963 GT Hawk; Kent Musgrave, 1924 Light 6; Jerry Day, 1949 Dodge; Butch Summers, 1964 Daytona HT; Gary & Sandie Keating, 1934 Commander street rod; Garry Klinger, 1952 Commander SLC; Scott Grainger, 1946 M16 - Toto; Larry Polhill and guest, Dale Sexton, Steve Fein, Jim Clever and guest, Tim Phillips, Michell Eastburn, Robert & Chantell Stevens and Gary Eluharty. Behind the scenes were John Rodhouse and Sharon Ware.

~ Michell Eastburn



There's never a time one can't talk just a little bit more about our Studebakers.
Photo courtesy of Steve Fein.

Scott Grainger shared his musings of the event:

I left the girls home to guard the shop and stay out of the heat. As the weather turned out heat wasn't an issue. A nice breeze and overcast sky keep the outdoors Studebaker show comfortable. I didn't get inside except for a quick look at some of the trucks and for a quick bite of fruit to eat courtesy of the club. I hadn't seen Kent and Jerry for some time and Kent's light 6 which sure is a nice vehicle. Will Eastburn's '49 4x4 sure is a cool truck. Took some time to look at it pretty close. Jerry's 1952 Dodge sure brought back some memories of a '51 that my dad had. The engine bay of the '52 Commander is immaculate and very well done! I talked to George G. about my plan to put an overdrive in Eddy (my new '47 M5) when I go to pick him up in Portland, OR this fall. Currently he has a 3 speed floor shift. That will make a nice conversion. I'll modify the OD controls as I did in LC, the 1951 Land Cruiser. Sure made her a lot of fun to drive.

A very nice day and place for a Studebaker gathering.



Photo courtesy of Michell Eastburn.

George with his '51 Champion. Note the fire extinguisher.

←
Kent Musgrave and Jerry Day with their 1924 EM Light 6 Roadster. Only recently has it been back on the road after engine work.
→



Photo courtesy of Scott Grainger.

GRAND CANYON STATE CHAPTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- JULY 8** COLLECTOR CAR APPRECIATION DAY. CHECK OUT A CRUISE-IN NEAR YOU.
- JULY 10** CHAPTER WILL MEET AT ORGAN STOP PIZZA, 1149 E. SOUTHERN AVE., MESA (SW CORNER OF STAPLEY DR. & SOUTHERN AVE.). FOR PIZZA AND MUSIC. ARRIVE BY 4:00PM TO GATHER, ORDER PIZZA AND ENJOY THE MIGHTY WURLITZER PIPE ORGAN. BRING FRIENDS AND FAMILY, TOO. CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS NOW ACCEPTED. CONTACT PEGGY 623-936-6116 or peggyeastburn@hotmail.com FOR INFORMATION.
- AUGUST 6-7** PRESCOTT AUTO CLUB CAR SHOW, PARTS EXCHANGE, SWAP MEET & OLD ENGINE FIRE UP AT WATSON LAKE PARK, PRESCOTT. VISIT: <http://www.paacaz.com/>
- AUGUST 7** GCSC BOARD AND OFFICERS WILL MEET AT 2:00 PM VIA ZOOM CALL OR VIDEO. MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND. TO JOIN IN THE MEETING CONTACT PEGGY AT 623-936-6116 or peggyeastburn@hotmail.com TO BE INCLUDED IN NOTIFICATION LIST FOR MEETING DETAILS.
- SEPTEMBER 10** INTERNATIONAL DRIVE YOUR STUDEBAKER DAY. YOUR SUGGESTIONS FOR AN ACTIVITY ARE WELCOME. CONTACT PEGGY 623-936-6116 or peggyeastburn@hotmail.com
- OCTOBER 23** CHAPTER WILL PARTICIPATE IN ORPHAN CAR SHOW HOSTED BY GRAND CANYON CHAPTER, HUDSON ESSEX TERRAPLANE CLUB AT LOS OLIVOS PARK, 28TH ST. & DEVONSHIRE (ONE BLOCK NORTH OF INDIAN SCHOOL RD.), PHOENIX. 9AM-2PM. CHARITY EVENT FOR SUNSHINE ACRES CHILDREN'S HOME. \$15 REGISTRATION BEFORE OCTOBER 20TH, \$20 AT GATE. DASH PLAQUE, FUN DOOR PRIZES AND AWARDS. CHAPTER WILL PROVIDE LUNCH TO GCSC PARTICIPANTS. CONTACT PEGGY AT peggyeastburn@hotmail.com / 623-936-6116 WITH QUESTIONS. REGISTRATION FORM AT: <https://allevents.in/phoenix/30th-annual-orphan-car-show/200022408719431#> OR SEE PAGE 14.
- DECEMBER 10** SAVE THE DATE FOR CHAPTER HOLIDAY PARTY, MEMBER APPRECIATION AND 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AT LARRY POLHILL'S PRIVATE COLLECTION, 5454 N. 93RD AVE., GLENDALE AT 11:00AM. CONTACT peggyeastburn@hotmail.com / 623-936-6116

FOR ALL UNDERLINED EVENTS LISTED ABOVE VISIT THE CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE STUDEBAKERS GRAND CANYON STATE CHAPTER TO ADD THE EVENTS TO YOUR CALENDAR. OR CONTACT PEGGY 623-936-6116 or peggyeastburn@hotmail.com FOR INFORMATION.

If any event plans change we will let you know with an e-mail or phone call and through the Chapter website or Facebook page.

Visit <https://sites.google.com/view/cruisinaz> or <http://www.arizonacarshows.com/carshows.htm>

NON-CHAPTER CAR EVENTS OF INTEREST

OCTOBER 1 SEDONA CAR SHOW

This year's Sedona Car Show hosted by the Sedona Car Club at the Sedona Airport will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Avanti and MBG. Avanti owners may wish to register early for the show as it is limited to 110 cars. Visit www.sedonacarclub.com for information and application.

CAFFEINE & CHROME: GATEWAY CLASSICS, 23305 N. 23RD AVE., PHOENIX 9AM-12PM. COFFEE, PASTRIES, MUSIC. FREE ADMISSION TO SHOWROOM. LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH.

CAFFEINE & CLASSICS: STREETSIDE CLASSICS, 614 E. AUTO CENTER DR., SUITE 1010, MESA. 9AM-12PM. COFFEE & DONUTS. ALL MAKES WELCOME. LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH.

UPCOMING EVENT

ORGAN STOP PIZZA GATHERING

When: Sunday July 10, 2022

Time: 4:00pm

Location: Organ Stop Pizza; 1149 E Southern Ave, Mesa 85204 (SWC of Stapley Dr. and Southern Ave.)

Chapter members will be enjoying the cool indoor setting of Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa. Bring you, your friends, and/or your family to this awesome venue. Seating will be at tables with chairs, no benches. Organ Stop now accepts debit/credit cards.

Please contact Peggy Eastburn at 623-936-6116 or peggyeastburn@hotmail.com if you have any questions.

Visit the Chapter Facebook page Studebakers Grand Canyon State Chapter to add this event to your calendar.

A History of Organ Stop Pizza

In 1972, the original Organ Stop Pizza restaurant premiered in Phoenix, Arizona at the corner of 7th Street and Missouri Avenue with a Wurlitzer pipe organ which was originally built for Grauman's Hollywood Egyptian Theater. This unique concept of a pizza parlor with a pipe organ was envisioned by William P. Brown, a Phoenix real estate developer whose enthusiasm for the theater pipe organ and its music led to the creation of this landmark attraction. Now Organ Stop Pizza is located at Stapley and Southern in Mesa.



July is National Ice Cream Month.

July 17 is National Ice Cream Day.

Eat Ice Cream and Enjoy!



CELEBRATE!



July Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 2 Roger Main | 15 Paul Vigne |
| 7 Linda Hertline | 16 Judi Binderman |
| 8 Ken Michael | 17 Sharon Ware |
| 9 Kent Musgrave | 17 Frank Wenzel |
| 13 Mary McConnell-Powell | 26 Larry Polhill |
| 14 Mike King | 27 Jan Widhalm |
| 14 Phyllis Setaro | 28 Claudia Robinette |
| 15 Brian Borgstede | |

July Anniversaries

- | |
|--------------------------------|
| 4 Will & Maryanne Eastburn |
| 11 Walt & Kitty Jazwinski |
| 14 Paul & Phyllis Setaro |
| 15 Tony & Kellie Lepore |
| 16 Ike & Virginia Quigley |
| 17 Frank & Elizabeth van Doorn |
| 30 Carol & Bob Westfall |

August Birthdays

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 Rachel Eastburn | 20 Steve Piper |
| 6 Joyce Wright | 21 Michael Hodges |
| 7 Thomas Ennis | 22 Butch Summers |
| 7 Elizabeth van Doorn | 23 Patrick Eastburn |
| 9 Chris Collins | 29 Jon Follendorf |
| 9 Jim Honsinger | 30 Camille Miles |
| 12 Walt Jazwinski | 30 Ed Smith |
| 13 Fred Gooch | 30 Bob Westfall |
| 14 Roger White | 31 Michell Eastburn |
| 15 Vicki Piper | 19 Kitty Jazwinski |
| 19 Luis Cruz | |
| 19 Malcolm Stinson Jr. | |

August Anniversaries

- | |
|---------------------------|
| 5 Adam & Michelle De Rosa |
| 5 Larry & Jan Malmstrom |
| 17 Steve & Vicki Piper |
| 24 John & Peg Akin |
| 25 Jim & Deanna Honsinger |
| 26 Bill & Mary Cervini |
| 31 Gary & Sandie Keating |
| 31 Dale & Norma Sexton |

Children's Birthdays



- | |
|--|
| 7-30 Felicia Eastburn
(daughter of Will & Maryanne) |
| 8-2 James Stevens
(son of Robbie & Chantell) |

- | |
|---|
| 8-14 Jack Serbin
(son of Brian & Julie) |
| 8-24 Chloe Eastburn
(daughter of Chris & Rachel) |

- | |
|---|
| 8-29 Domenica Eastburn
(daughter of Will & Maryanne) |
|---|



SDC EVENTS

International SDC Meet

The SDC's 58th International Meet was held in South Bend, May 3-7. Dee Gruver, a member of the Beach Cities Orange Inland Empire (BCOIE) Chapter reported in her Chapter newsletter about the meet:

The first 3 days of the meet were cool and rainy in South Bend, Indiana but Studebaker owners are loyal and tough so the meet prevailed. Sadly the weather did cause the cancellation of a few planned events. Following are some of the stats for the meet:

- Registrations - 661 ▪ People attending - 1,242
- Vehicles - 273 - of those 124 were judged and 149 displayed.

As usual the West Coast was well represented in attendance. The 2023 meet will take place in Wisconsin in September. Watch for future information.

GCSC members attending were Russ and Sharon Ware who vended, Ed & Linda Smith displaying their 1951 Stake Bed, Ed & Linda Costell and Bob & Mimi Halgren. Apologies if anyone was missed.

Each year members and chapters make donations to the host chapter for Concours judging awards. Earlier this year, the GCSC board voted to donate \$100.00 to the Michiana Chapter for three awards.

La Palma Car Show and Swap Meet

The 48th La Palma meet was held Sunday, May 29th at La Palma Park in Anaheim and it was a nice day for the car show and swap meet. Billed as the largest Studebaker car show in the West, 63 cars and trucks were registered. Of those, 28 were judged using SDC official judging rules and 27 Studes were display only.

Chapter members attending were Ed & Linda Smith displaying their 1951 Stake Bed truck, Frank Wenzel and Kent Vandenberg. Vending were Russ & Sharon Ware, John Kroulik, Kolton Kroulik and Sebastian Scopelite.



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Seat Upholstery or Seat Covers

By Jerry Blount

There is seat upholstery and there are seat covers. Seat upholstery duplicates the original construction, wrapping around and tightly secured to the seat frames. Seat covers, however, are basically intended to be installed over the original factory upholstery.

The point of this discussion is regarding on the Studebaker bucket seats. The original factory bucket seat upholstery had a vinyl loops sewn below the seam, separating the center insert, whether the bottom or the back cushion-panels on either side of the center insert, A stiff rod is inserted on this loop and this is 'hogged' down to the seat frame to create the 'bucket' function and appearance.

The fasteners used to attach seat upholstery are known as "Hog Rings" since their appearance is similar to the rings that were used in the noses of hogs.

The loop of the material is a must if you buy replacement seat upholstery. Seat covers are a poor substitute for bucket seat cars since they are literally only seat covers. You will see Gran Turismo Hawks or Lark Daytonas on e-Bay that have seat covers where the surface of the seats are flat with no 'bucket' shape.

If you are re-upholstering a bucket seat Studebaker, make sure you know what you are getting.



FAST FACT: R2 or 2R?

R2 was a 1963/64 model year Studebaker built HD 289 ci V8 engine that had a Paxton Supercharger and a 4 barrel -carburetor. Studebaker rated these engines at 290 BHP. These engines could be ordered in an Avanti, a GT Hawk or a Lark type car.

2R was a series of trucks built by Studebaker for model years 1949 to 1953. These trucks were rated from 1/2 ton to 2 ton. All were powered by Studebaker L-head 6-cylinder engines. These trucks and later models of the same design are often referred to a "C-Cab" trucks, which was the factory designation for the cab style. Studebaker sold more of these trucks than all other series combined.

Reprinted from the Northwest Chapter newsletter, Jennifer Arnold, editor.

*Keep America Beautiful,
Drive a Studebaker!*

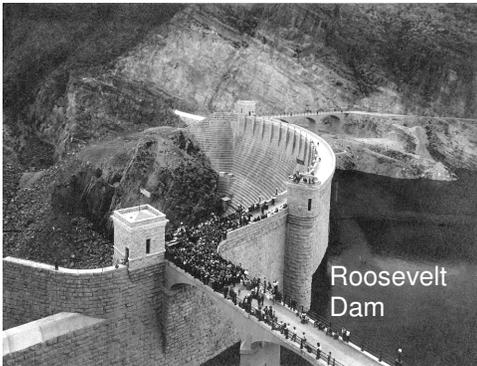
THE TEMPE HISTORY MUSEUM

By Richard Dormois



In 1991 the Tempe History Museum opened the doors on the southwest corner of Rural Road and Southern Ave. In 2010 a major renovation and remodel were presented as the jewel of the Tempe Community center, flanked by the Pyle Adult Center, Tempe Public Library and Vital Center for the Arts.

On May 19, the Grand Canyon State Chapter visited the museum about 10am. Nineteen members with eight Studebakers, our group explored four thematic areas: College Town, Building Our Community, Living Together and Kid's Place. These themes are likely to overlap as this article unfolds. It was gratifying to see Aubrey Lynn and Chloe Eastburn, the future of our club.



Agriculture played a large role in Tempe's development with irrigation being a critical component for growing vegetables, alfalfa, feed corn, citrus and cotton. President Theodore Roosevelt is given credit for agricultural success in Tempe and environs, having dedicated Roosevelt Dam in 1911, taming the Salt River. Today children enjoy hands on experience in the museum growing vegetables and loading a restored 1928 Chevrolet one ton farm truck.

There are two primary theater exhibitions in the museum. "Distinct. Diverse. Dynamic." tells the story of Tempe, a Southwestern desert urban community with a distinct identity and sense of purpose. The scenes are depicted in a continuous running video. Seating is on soft cushions emblazoned with images of thousands of Arizona State graduates. The "Kid's Place" theater affords children the opportunity to perform live on stage in the regalia of the professions as adults.

Luminaries in many disciplines who shed their light on Tempe's history and development are featured in the museum's displays. Country music icon Waylon Jennings entertained nightly in the sixties at JD's on Mill Avenue. His early music was produced here and he chose Mesa, Arizona as his final resting place. Yet to be featured in the Tempe History Museum is Dennis Lynde, who also performed in the bistros of Mill Avenue and from the rooftops. He was able to expand on the Museum's entertainment coverage. Glen Miller and "In the Mood" from 1939 can be heard on a vintage Crosley radio as well as "That's Allright Mama", Elvis Presley's first number one hit in 1954. One of our members may have been seen in front of the radio emulating the King.

Another important person in Tempe's history is Pope Paul II who conducted mass at Sun Devil Stadium in 1987. Pat Tillman, his career and those who have received college scholarships in his name are featured with images and stories of their lives.

Early pioneers who helped form Tempe's culture arrived here from many countries around the world and are given exposure throughout the museum in print and images. Native American tribes occupy significant space, particularly the Hohokum. Sister Cities in eleven countries celebrate Tempe, Arizona annually.

Athletics, particularly Arizona State University sports teams, are featured in the museum. Coverage of the the Tempe Crimson Rims professional baseball team playing here in the 1890s was a revelation to some.

Time nor space permit an accurate and complete description of the Tempe History Museum. You have to go. It is truly an amazing place to visit and you can at 805 E. Southern Ave., Tempe, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday. Free with donations accepted. Group tours can be scheduled at 480-350-5100. We are indebted to Museum Specialist Jen Sweeny and Administrative Assistant Amanda Martin for guiding our quest and answering many questions for this article. Thank you.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING AFTER MUSEUM TOUR

At about noon, Sharon Ware gathered the flock in a quiet corner of Culver's Restaurant across Southern Ave. for lunch. She passed out flyers announcing future gatherings at Streetside Classics, Organ Stop Pizza, International Drive Your Studebaker Day, Orphan Car Show and 50th Anniversary Party. Sharon awarded the Studebaker driver \$25.00 gas card to the Chris Eastburn family who arrived in their 1963 R1 Lark. Manager Kathy Ochoa and servers Ruselle and LaTrey made special note to cater to our group.

Thank you to Peggy Eastburn for formulating the notion of a visit to the Tempe History Museum. Thanks to Michell Eastburn for erecting directional feathers and John Rodhouse for collecting and storing them.

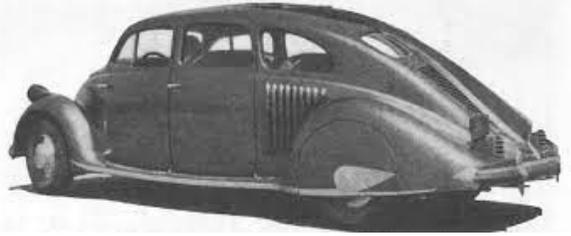
Editor's note: See page 4 of June newsletter for a list of members who attended the May event.

WAS STUDEBAKER ALWAYS AHEAD OF ITS TIME?

By Dan Kuhl

The most often posed question to me by people from the car hobby who are not Studebaker followers is, "why did Studebaker go out of business?" The short answer is auto manufacturing was not profitable when compared to the massive diversification program that began at the Studebaker Corporation in the 1950s.

After learning about the unit body Sterkenberg prototype being unveiled to the public at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933, my detailed answer began to take shape. This concept of unit body construction would be adopted by all American automobile manufacturers by the end of the 1960s. Today there are even unit body pickups being made. My contention is further substantiated by Studebaker's reluctance to stamp (press) in house entire bodies and the fact that the largest body stamping (roof) used by Studebaker in 1836 was made by Edward G. Budd of Philadelphia. Studebaker would continue a relationship with Budd until 1966 when car production ceased. Even Studebaker's rising star the Avanti had its body manufactured away from South Bend at Molded Fiberglass in Ashtabula, Ohio. A failed attempt to make Avanti bodies in South Bend occurred in January 1963, after which Molded Fiberglass continued to provide bodies.



Historically, Studebaker manufactured all body parts in house until 1913. They employed the same methods used in their carriage manufacturing, a metal skin over a wooden frame. It was at this time that Edward G. Budd began promoting all steel body construction after realizing the methods used to manufacture their first auto body for an open car, consisted of 1200 parts. Only the Dodge brothers bought into this new concept and purchased many steel bodies from Budd. At this time the Philadelphia firm believed so strongly in its new method that patents for the process were released to the industry as a whole.

Motor Magazine stated in 1936 that the Studebaker body manufactured by Budd was made from only four metal panels. With the advantages of simplicity, greater strength, and less weight the new technology permitted Budd to ship nests of panels to South Bend rather than bulky whole bodies that were more costly to ship.

By 1951, Studebaker had set its course, using the old style body on frame automobile construction. Assembly required 870 different stampings to complete an automobile. A 1951 issue of *Spotlight* stated 935 auto bodies were produced daily using this soon to vanish antiquated method. (Editor's note: *Spotlight* was a Studebaker publication for employees. See page 13 for June, 1951 *Spotlight* cover.)

In 1955 when Budd was making bodies for the new Ford Thunderbird, Murray, Budd's last competitor, dropped out of the auto body business. Budd was now the sole provider in a shrinking business where most manufacturers were gearing up for their own unibody manufacturing. It would be too costly for Studebaker's small annual production to tool up to make their own unit steel bodies while on the other hand it was very costly to ship body panels from Budd's Philadelphia facility.

With the uptick in cash in 1959 after the success of the Lark and following many years of bad luck, future business plans had to be made by the power-brokers in New York. As in 1935, should Studebaker continue in a failing car manufacturing business? In 1935 it was in the best interest of the shareholders to stay in the car business. In 1959 the corporate powers chose to diversify, even though for appearance purposes it looked like Studebaker cars would continue to be the main focus. The Avanti had no effect on what was already in the cards by 1962.

It is my opinion, in this particular case, Studebaker was not ahead of its time as a competitive auto manufacturer, but did have many firsts in innovation and styling that came to fruition in the cars we so dearly love. With these in mind, Studebaker was often labeled ahead of its time and rightfully so.

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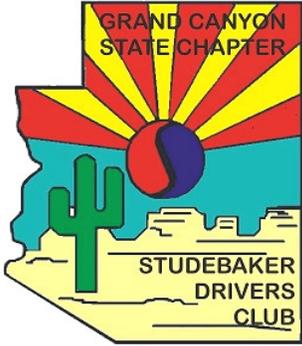
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Newsletter of the Grand Canyon State Chapter, SDC

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- 8-7 GCSC Board Meeting

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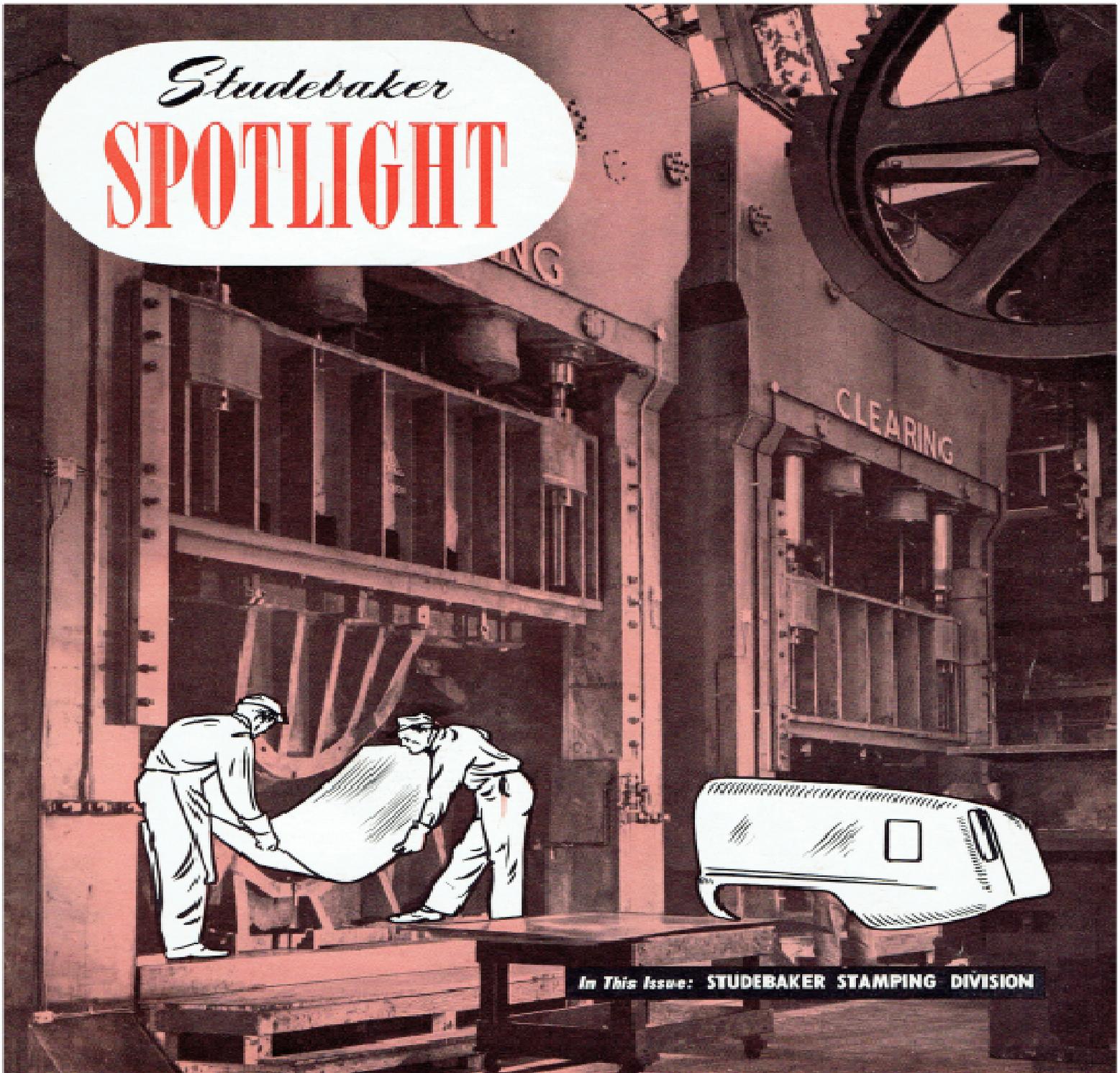
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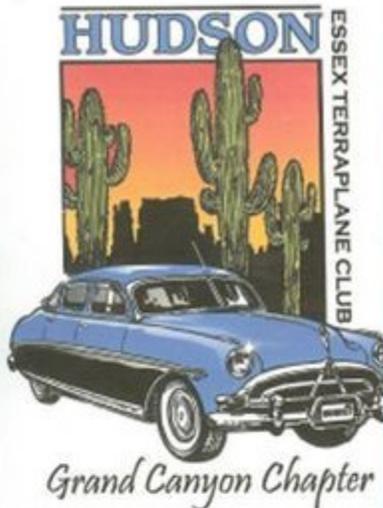


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VOLUME 15

June 1951

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