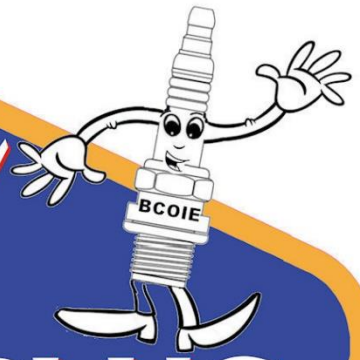


February 2025

Studebaker SPARKPLUG

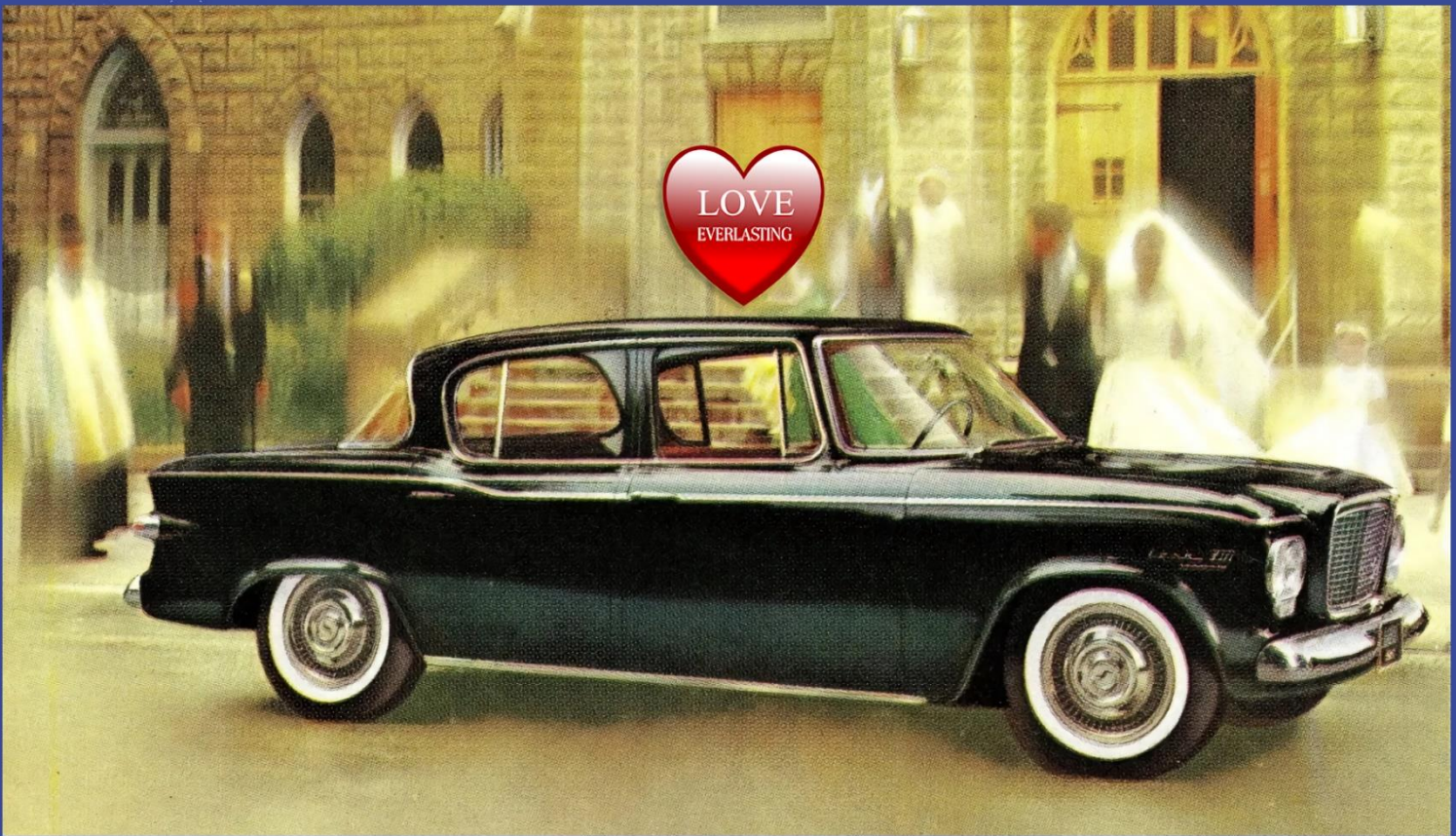


The Official Newsletter of



Happy Valentine's Day

Established 1967





BCOIE Chapter

Beach Cities • Orange • Inland Empire

Chapter Information

BCOIE Chapter Meetings are on the 2nd Saturday of each month at:
 Polly's Pies 18132 Imperial Highway, Yorba Linda, CA 714-572-9679 ~ at 4:30 pm

*** Please bring cash for purchases to pay the chapter, so the chapter can pay the bill with one check. ***

For additional information please contact any chapter officer or check the calendar of events in each newsletter or on our website.

BCOIE Chapter membership is **\$20.00 per year**, due January 1st. You *must* be a member of the National Studebaker Drivers Club prior to joining any Chapter. Please mail your dues promptly to:

Debbie Stockey – Membership
 17410 Golden Maple Lane
 Yorba Linda, CA 92886

Newsletter Information - The Studebaker Sparkplug is the official publication of the BCOIE Chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club, Inc. For ads or classifieds contact the editor listed below.

BCOIE Chapter Officers

Elected	President	Rosiland Metzker	714-315-8292	roldstudes@earthlink.net
	Vice President	Jonni Elmore	951-545-2664	elmorejonni@gmail.com
	Secretary / Sunshine	Dee Gruver	562-946-2249	cwgruverconst@aol.com
	Treasure /Membership	Debbie Stockey	714-524-7965	debizoo@aol.com
Appointed	Webmaster / Newsletter Editor	Dan Scott	818-558-1791	dansct@sbcglobal.net
	Facebook Editor	Jim Studebaker	949-235-4707	jstudebaker5@gmail.com

Pacific Southwest Zone Officers

Elected	Zone Director	Ed Smith	602-290-1045	edcollects@gmail.com
	Zone Coordinator	Dan Scott	818-558-1791	dansct@sbcglobal.net
Appointed	Regional Manager - Calif. South	Catherine Chen	310-431-8179	CatherineLchen@gmail.com

SDC Website: <https://studebakerdriversclub.com/>

BCOIE Website: <https://www.studebakersocal.com/>

BCOIE Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BCOIESOCAL>

Check out our new Instagram Page:

BCOIE Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bcoiechapter/>

President's Message Rosiland Metzker



Hope everyone had a great January, and I hope this message finds everyone doing well. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the fire victims and wish them a speedy and smooth recovery process.

What a wonderful meeting we had in January. Your new board met prior to the meeting for an officer's meeting and covered a lot.

We discussed La Palma which will be in September due to the new build out of the park, 2025 calendar of events which our new Vice President, Jonni Elmore, will be communicating as events are finalized, and many other topics were discussed.

Big shout out to our editor, Dan Scott, for his creativity and doing such a great job on the newsletter!

We were so pleased to see Gary Gross's 1941 Champion that replaced the vehicle that was totaled last year.

I received a request for a 1950's Studebaker for a 50's event in April. They are only having 6-7 different makes for this event and would love to have a Studebaker. If you are interested, please give me a call as soon as possible.

Happy Valentines and see you at the next meeting.

Respectively,

Rosiland

Meeting Minutes



Meeting minutes for BCOIE Chapter – January 11, 2025. The following members were in attendance: John & Rosiland Metzker, Jack & Fay Weber, Jonni Elmore, Jeanne Ertel, Don Eades, Sandy Eades, Jack & Debbie Stockey, Don & Jeri Cox, Gary Gross, Randy Clements, Sam & Cheryl Wheeler, Jim Studebaker and Bud & Dee Gruver.

PRESIDENT Rosiland Metzker called the meeting to order at 4:45 pm. followed by the Pledge to the Flag and a prayer by Sam Wheeler. The President welcomed all members and guests.

SECRETARY Dee Gruver reported that the December minutes were printed in the January Newsletter. Membership voted to approve minutes as printed.

TREAS/MEMBERSHIP Debbie Stockey reported the current financial information. The membership report shows 12 paid members to date. Debbie reminded everyone that dues for 2025 are NOW due. Motion to accept the report as given was made and approved.

V-PRESIDENT Jonni Elmore reported that the LA Chapter will be hosting their annual car show on April 6, all clubs are invited. Future club events are being scheduled and will be listed in the next newsletter. Jim Studebaker reminded everyone to get their cars out to local car shows and promote interest in Studebakers.

OLD BUSINESS: Plans for La Palma to be held on September 28 are progressing. The city of Anaheim says the park renovations will be completed and ready for the show by that date.

NEW BUSINESS: President Rosiland reported that we need to be aware of scam calls using club officers' names and asking for money. Just hang up.

Respectfully, Dee Gruver, Secretary

 *From the desk of the editor...*
Dan Scott

See page 11 for Editors comments...



47 years later, we still love the cars of *Grease*...

Grease turned 47 recently, and although John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John (RIP) may be showing their age these days (aren't we all?), the cars from the movie are forever young. And iconic. And worth a lot of money.

Case in point: The black 1949 Mercury known as "Hell's Chariot"—driven by Travolta's nemesis in the movie—was the last *Grease* car to cross the block, and it sold for \$478,000 in a Julien's Hollywood Auction three years ago.

Over four decades have passed since Sandy and Danny won the dance-off and the musical became a giant box office smash in 1978. Here are the most significant cars in *Grease*:



1948 Studebaker Commander Regal

Nothing more than a bit part in the movie, the '48 Studebaker with the pink paint job was the perfect ride for Rizzo and the Pink Ladies. If only we could have seen a bit more of it. It appears at the beginning of the film when the girls arrive at Rydell High on the first day of their senior year, and then we see it later, briefly, at a pep rally.

Thankfully, the BCOIE has the Pink Panther to remind us of the great movie.



1949 Dodge Wayfarer

Compared to Danny Zuko's (Travolta's) 1949 Dodge Wayfarer, the Pink Ladies' Studebaker was a total screen hog. While most people remember Greased Lightning as Danny's car, they would be wrong (it's his buddy Kenickie's car). Zuko actually owned the beat-up Wayfarer that he and Sandy (Newton-John) took to the drive-in. We didn't see much of that car, however, since the date ended prematurely when Zuko got a little fresh and Sandy slammed the door on his, um, plans.

"You think I'm gonna stay here with you in this... *sin wagon*?" she asks before storming off.

1949 Mercury Custom

Driven by Leo “Craterface” Batmudo, leader of the Scorpions—rivals of Zuko’s T-Birds—the 1949 Mercury Custom was the coolest ride in the movie, even though it ultimately lost at Thunder Road.

Among the car’s sweet features are its paint job (black with yellow flames), flame-shooting tailpipes, and wicked-sharp serrated blades sticking from its hubcaps, which chewed up its rivals—literally.

Eddie Paul created Hell’s Chariot and the more than 40 other cars seen in the film. Actually, he built two versions of Leo’s car, a stunt car that no longer exists, as well as the star car that Julien’s auction house sold in 2015. If you watch the movie carefully, you can tell which is which: the stunt car’s windows are rounded and the star car’s windows are squared.



1948 Ford De Luxe convertible

The car that becomes “Greased Lightning” is a 1948 Ford De Luxe convertible that Kenickie buys with the money he saved while working at Bargain City over the summer. The De Luxe needs a lot of work and is definitely nothing to look at—until the T-Birds take it to shop class and Zuko starts singing about it. That’s where things get a little confusing.

First, Greased Lightning switches back and forth from Kenickie’s white bucket of bolts to a red dream car with fins, back to a white car, and finally back to the red dream car—which *flies*. And Zuko

sings about the car’s “four on the floor” transmission when the T-Birds are working on it, but during the race he uses a column shifter. Even more confusing, he sings about the car being “automatic.” What is he talking about anyway, the wipers?

Whatever. All of the cars in *Grease* are systematic and hydromatic... and super cool. Happy 47th birthday!

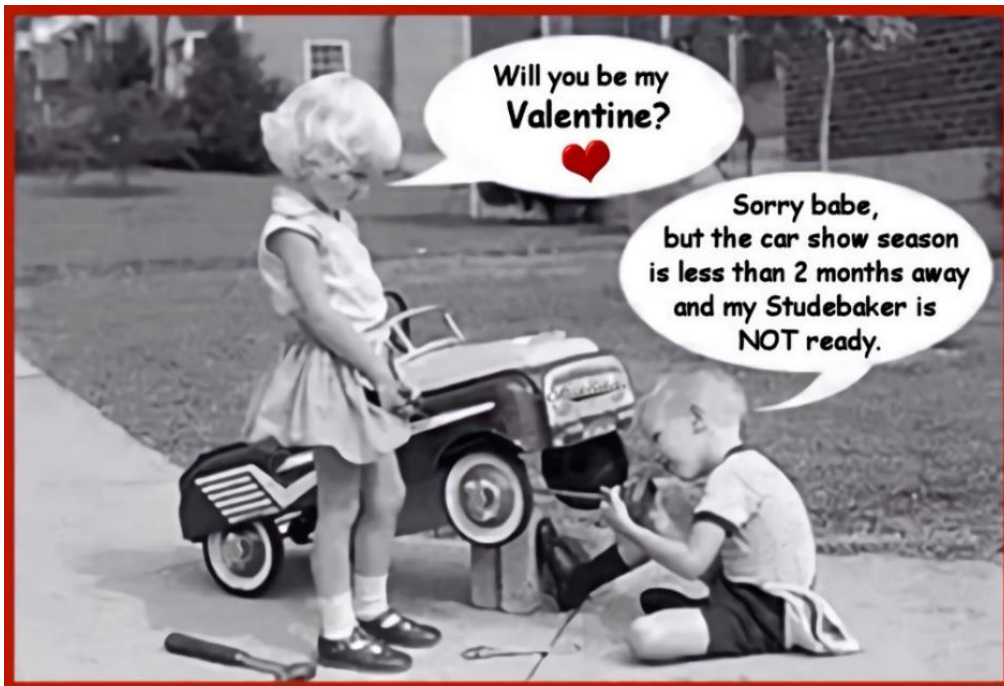


The 20 Best Car Movies of All Time...what's your favorite? Not my list...

Grand Prix (1966)
Bullitt (1968)
The Italian Job (1969)
Duel (1971)
Two-Lane Blacktop (1971)
Vanishing Point (1971)
Dirty Mary, Crazy Larry (1974)
Smokey and the Bandit (1977)
The Driver (1978)
The Blues Brothers (1980)

The Cannonball Run (1981)
The Road Warrior (1981)
Days of Thunder (1990)
Ronin (1998)
Fast and Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006)
Death Proof (2007)
Speed Racer (2008)
Mad Max Fury Road (2015)
Baby Driver (2017)
Ford v Ferrari (2019)

***My vote goes to American Graffiti, which didn't make the above list.



When Studebaker was nearly saved by the world’s largest GM dealer

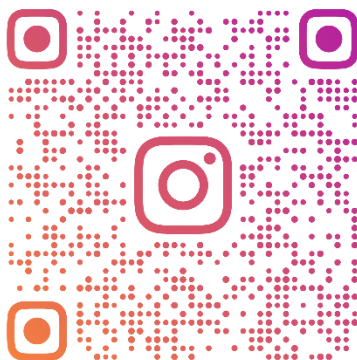
By Daniel Strohl May 31, 2022 in Classics

George Murphy was riding high in the mid-1960s. He owned a string of GM dealerships in Hawaii and California. He was named Hawaii’s Businessman of the Year in 1965. *Time* magazine profiled him less than a year later. And he’d just pocketed \$15 million from turning around Honolulu Iron Works. The obvious next step for him then was to buy Studebaker just before it quit building cars.

To Murphy, it made perfect sense. The Saskatchewan native had been selling cars since he joined his father’s Chevrolet dealership in 1921. He later established his own Oldsmobile dealership in Honolulu in 1938, leveraging the success of that to buy into Aloha Chevrolet in 1940. His modus operandi, as he explained to the *Wall Street Journal* in 1940, consisted of buying “rundown, poor management companies” then turning them around, though during World War II he also found a successful scheme buying trucks in bulk then turning around and selling the trucks to the U.S. and Allied governments right when they needed trucks the most. Under his ownership, Aloha expanded by selling GM vehicles—including Holdens—all around the Pacific Rim, eventually becoming the largest General Motors dealership in the world.

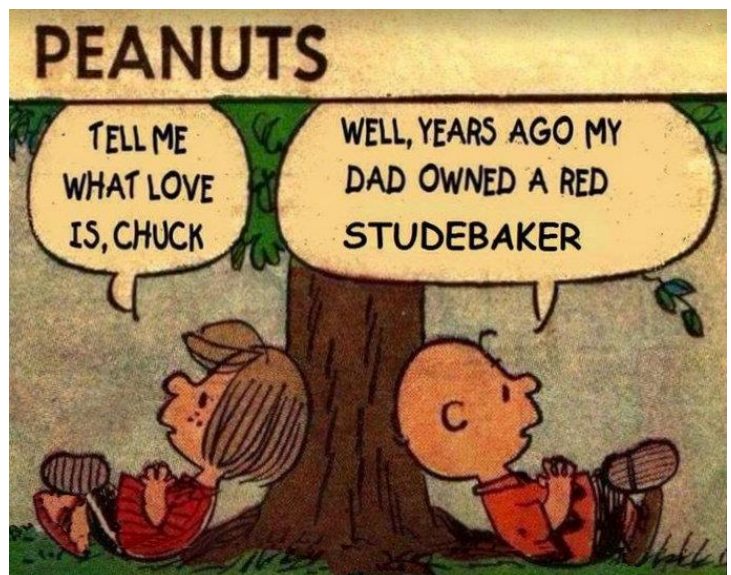
Studebaker’s automotive division, meanwhile, had been in freefall. In 1963 alone, it lost more than \$25 million, prompting the company—which had already started to diversify its holdings years prior—to close the South Bend, Indiana, plant and move production to Hamilton, Ontario. Murphy sensed an opportunity with Studebaker, so in February of 1966, after selling Honolulu Iron Works, he approached Studebaker chairman Randolph Guthrie with an offer to buy 500,000 shares of Studebaker stock—more than a sixth of the outstanding shares of common stock—at \$30 per share, above market price. The offer came out of left field, according to a lawsuit between Studebaker and Allied Products, a Studebaker supplier that also entered in negotiations to buy the company immediately after Murphy’s offer. Studebaker’s board of directors appeared in favor of Murphy’s offer but ultimately left the decision up to the stockholders, who, by all indications, let the offer die on the vine. Guthrie, in turn, rejected Allied’s offer, and a month later Studebaker shut down the Hamilton assembly line, bringing an end to the company’s car making efforts.

Murphy held on to Aloha until the early Seventies but remained active purchasing and rehabilitating businesses into the Eighties. Without knowing more about his plans for Studebaker, it’s difficult to extrapolate his chances at succeeding in turning the carmaker around, but any continuation of production would have likely been better than shutting it down entirely.



BCOIECHAPTER

Visit our NEW Instagram Page with this QR Code





Why Did Studebaker Stop Making Cars?

By C. Gordon Feb. 26, 2024

When it comes to works of art, novels, or even cars, they're sometimes not entirely appreciated during their time, with future generations giving credit and praise that would have been more helpful in the past. This appears to be the case with Studebaker, the now revered car company that's garnered more respect in the decades after the era in which it struggled. You're not likely to see one zipping down the street outside of a car TV show, as the last Studebaker rolled off the line in 1966. So, what happened?

The Studebakers were a German family of blacksmiths who founded their company in 1852 and they incorporated in 1868 as the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, originally producing carriages, wagons, and buggies for decades. It may sound like a rather humble business, but by the mid-1880s production exceeded 75,000 and made the company over \$2 million, despite a few major fires that nearly destroyed the business. Back then, Studebaker had a few rather prominent customers, including U.S. presidents Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, and Abraham Lincoln, who rode in a Studebaker the night he was assassinated at Ford's Theater — not that there's any connection there. Those carriages weren't exactly Air Force One.

As the century changed, so did Studebaker's strategy within the evolving transportation industry.

Evolving into the modern era

Unlike many other carriage companies, Studebaker was able to fully transition into a prominent automobile company, and in the early 1900s Studebaker entered the modernizing industry in 1902 with electric vehicles and 1904 with gasoline versions, completed in partnership with other brands. It's like a typewriter company seamlessly transitioning to computers. In 1912, Studebaker marketed its first fully manufactured gasoline automobile, and in the years that followed went on to become a highly regarded and successful brand in the automotive industry.

Prosperity followed in the 1920s, with the production of vehicles in the lower to mid-range price, including popular models like the 1920 Studebaker Big Six. But it's believed that company management misread the depth of the Great Depression, and they went into receivership in 1933. Studebaker limped along for years and seemed to recover, with the company gaining a foothold in the truck field, and also later producing such successes as the low-priced, six-cylinder Champion. After World War II they even adapted with new styles to fit the taste of the post-war industry, including models like the Starlight Coupe, which featured wraparound rear windows and the so-called "bullet nose."

Studebaker ultimately faced financial difficulties in the mid-1950s and merged with Packard, posting a \$43 million loss in 1956. The 1959 Lark led to profitability for a few brief years, though problems persisted, and the South Bend plant closed in 1963, with the last Studebaker rolling off the line in Hamilton, Ontario, in March 1966. Still, 114 years is certainly a good run for any automobile manufacturer, and numerous collectors still keep Studebaker's memory alive today.

**WE INVENTED
COOL®**



Chapter Members Profile

This month we're going to highlight members Jim and Pam Watts, of San Clemente, with a reprint of the "Great Garages" article from 2022. Jim has expressed an interest in hosting a small get-together at his home, described in the following article. Jim has been in contact with BCOIE member Jim Studebaker to work out the details. When we know more, we'll provide you with updates.



Jim Watts and his wife Pam steward a collection of nine cars and eight motorcycles in San Clemente, California. They own a whale watching and fishing expedition business in nearby Newport Beach.

Their two-acre cul-de-sac home has a driveway that circles back to the 1,700-square-foot garage in the rear and a workshop.

The nine cars are, chronologically: a circa-1930 Studebaker open wheel race car; a 1934 Ford Victoria; the 1952 Jowett Jupiters, red and green; a drag-racing 1963 Plymouth 426, similar to the one he bought new in 1963; 1956 Buick Roadmaster Convertible; 1953 Studebaker Commander; 1959 Willy's Jeep/4x4 Wagon; and a 2003 Mercedes SLK32 AMG roadster. His cycles, mostly older, include a vintage Simplex Auto Motorbike with only 20 miles and a Matchless cycle he once rode on a 100-mile-plus daily commute.

He was born in Peoria, Illinois, in 1942. "My older brother and I ran a speed shop back in the early '60s," he recalls. "We raced two top fuel cars and a super stock Plymouth at that time. We also built drag-race cars and did a lot of Corvette work, especially for the college kids in town."

In 1988 he bought a 1930 front-drive Ruxton from his brother's estate. "It was at that time, because I had all this room on the property, my collection began," he says. "It's not for public view, but we have friends that like to come over for happy hours and hang out in the shop."

We'll let Jim tell the cars' stories:

•**Circa-1930 Studebaker open wheel race car** — “The car runs and drives well. I don’t have any history. It looks like it came out of a river, but that’s the way I like it.”

•**1934 Ford Victoria** — “This was my first car. I paid \$100 for it in 1961. It was my daily driver for several years. I drag raced it on weekends in Modified Sportsman Class and later moved up to C Gas class on the weekends.

“I was living in Peoria, Illinois, at this time. In 1965 I moved to California; I sold the car for \$650. Years later, I tried to find the car. When I did, it took 28 years before I bought it back for \$20,000. My wife and I have driven the car on four Americruises. We’ve been to Canada, Denver and many other trips. She is still my favorite car.”



•**1952 Jowett Jupiters, red and green** — “I bought my first Jowett Jupiter, in red, at a Mecum auction about six years ago. I had been looking for a Jupiter because my father and oldest brother both owned Jowett Jupiters. “These are unique cars. They have chromoly tube frames, four-wheel torsion bar suspension, a water-cooled 4-cylinder Boxer engine, 4-speed trans and a hand-pounded aluminum body.

“They have a rich racing history, too, having won Le Mans in 1950, ’51 and ’52 in the 1500 CC class, plus many other races.

“I found the green one for sale in Canada in 2021 during the pandemic; it’s the newest car added to my collection. After lots of paperwork and expense, I finally got the car out of Canada. When I tried to register it, I ended up at the California Highway Department trying to get it okayed.

“After they ran a history, we found out that the car I just bought had belonged to my deceased older brother 46 years ago. He had a collection of about 50 cars. In 1975 he and his wife were killed by a drunk driver, so naturally this car has a very special meaning to me.”

•**1953 Studebaker Commander** — “I bought and restored this car because in high school my best friend had one and we spent a lot of time riding around in that car.”

•**1963 drag-racing Plymouth 426 Max Wedge** — “My wife gave me this car for my 60th birthday.”

From 1962 to 1964, Chrysler offered the muscle car power plant in the B Platform Dodges and Plymouths.

•**1956 Buick Roadmaster Convertible** — When I bought this, it was in horrible condition. It really wasn’t worth restoring in terms of the market value, but then they are hard to find and I wanted one, so I spent many years restoring it.”

•**1959 Willy’s Jeep/4×4 wagon** — “In 1969 I bought a 1955 Willy’s 4×4 wagon that I used for hauling motorcycles to ride in the desert. I even drove the Willy’s the length of Baja California before the road was paved. My wife saw pictures of the Willy’s and liked it, so she found one and bought it.”



•**2003 Mercedes SLK32 AMG roadster** — “This car was bought absolutely by accident at Barrett Jackson in Las Vegas, when I put my hand up to bid and no one bid after me as I hoped.”

•**Eight motorcycles** — “These are mostly older, including a vintage 1947 Simplex Automatic Motorbike that is an unrestored perfect original bike. I also have a Russian Voskhod Model 2 motorcycle that is said to be the only one in the United States; it’s in perfect unrestored condition. I also own a 1955 Matchless G80 competition Scrambler that I rode in the desert and to downtown L.A. to work for several years. About 10 years ago, I spent six years restoring it.”



From the desk of the editor...

Dan Scott

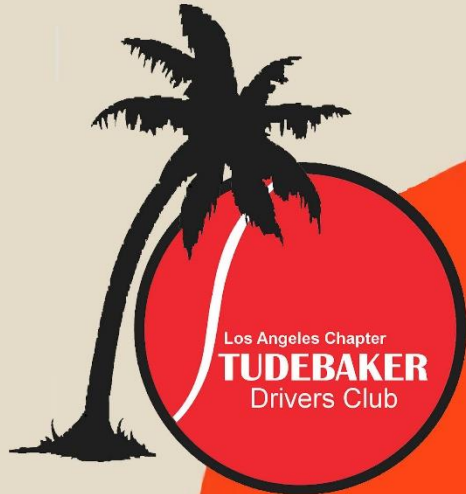
It wasn't that long ago that the Horseless Carriage Club's Southern California region had over 200 members. To participate in one of the club's drives required a 1915 or older car. And there were plenty of those. Now, however, there are not only fewer old cars left in running order, but fewer old guys & gals interested in or able to keep them going. Is it a symptom of a national disease in collector cardom? "Our membership is down," said HCC member Vicki Trepanier, as she signed up drivers in this year's Excursion. "Now you have drivers who are less active. It's not easy starting one of these big old cars with a hand-crank starter." "Twenty years ago, we had 200 members—we're at 85 now," said Horseless Carriage Club president Pete Eastwood. "Kinda the whole car thing's shrinking, ya know, aging out."

I hate to bring up the subject, but membership is important to any organization. While we rightfully praise those before us who started and ran the chapter, we all have to do our part to make it grow and prosper into the future. We can't rely on the National SDC, we have to do it ourselves, but how?

We have a Website and Facebook page, along with a brand-new Instagram Page, but our best asset is the **La Palma Meet**. How do we attract more visitors and how do we get them to join the chapter? I always seek out Studebaker owners at local car meets and try to get them to join, but I have to admit, generally I get the same answer...I'm not into joining clubs, or yah, I'll think about it.

What can we do **new** this year at La Palma? **Any ideas?** Let me know so we can keep this conversation going.

Los Angeles Chapter *Presents*



40th Annual
Classic



STUDEBAKER *Car Show*

Sunday, April 6, 2025 ~ 9 am - 2 pm
8876 Corbin Ave., Northridge, CA

Download Registration Forms at: www.studebakersla.com



51st
Annual *La Palma*
STUDEBAKER
Car Show & Swap Meet

Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025 ~ La Palma Park, Anaheim, CA

New Date ~ Newly Remodeled Park!!!

Save the date!



LA PALMA THE LARGEST
STUDEBAKER
MEET IN THE WEST!



www.StudebakerSoCal.com

Until next month, Happy Studebakering!!!



_____ **New** _____ **Renewal**

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ **Cell Phone:** (____) _____

Email address: _____

Birthdays (All Family members): _____

Anniversary Date: _____

Studebaker(s) owned: Year and Model

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Referred to BCOIE Chapter by: _____

DUES NOTE: You must be a member of the Studebaker Drivers Club

SDC Member # _____ (Studebaker Drivers Club application form is available on website.

BCOIE dues are \$20 per Family Annually

PRINT FORM & MAIL WITH CHECK (payable BCOIE Chapter) to:

**Debbie Stockey
c/o BCOIE Membership
17410 Golden Maple Lane
Yorba Linda, CA 92886-5196**